

The Kashmir Talk

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India now self-reliant in food grains; IFFCO played key role: Shah

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Amit Shah, on Sunday emphasized that India is now self-reliant in the field of food grains and praised the Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative (IFFCO) for playing a significant role in this achievement.

He stated that IFFCO has effectively connected farmers with fertilizers and further integrated fertilizers with cooperatives, adding that the organization now stands proudly after completing fifty years of its illustrious journey.

The Home Minister was speaking at the Golden Jubilee celebra-



tion of IFFCO at its Kalol branch in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, where he also laid the foundation stone for the Beej Anusandhan Kendra (Seed Research Centre).

Shah remarked that IFFCO's 50-year journey demonstrates the incredible outcomes that can

be achieved when cooperative and corporate values work in synergy.

He noted that IFFCO has efficiently handled all aspects related to research and development, marketing, branding, and outreach.

Expressing optimism about the future, Shah

said that by the time IFFCO celebrates its centenary, its reputation among cooperative organizations worldwide will have grown significantly.

He added that IFFCO has undertaken various research and development initiatives. Recalling the groundbreaking ceremony of IFFCO's Kalol factory, he said it was considered a major milestone at the time.

As time progressed, IFFCO expanded its research into areas such as Nano Urea, Nano DAP, Nano Liquid Urea, and Liquid DAP, significantly increasing production.

Shah highlighted that the organization has

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India Doing Better Than Other Countries After US Tariffs: NSE CEO

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
KATRA:

Asserting that a situation of confusion persists in the world after the recent imposition of reciprocal tariffs by the US, NSE Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Ashish Kumar Chauhan on Sunday said India is doing much better than other countries. He said a clear situation is expected to emerge within the next one or two weeks as there will

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Prez leaves on two-nation overseas visit

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

President Droupadi Murmu left here on Sunday for Lisbon on the first leg of her two-nation state visit to Portugal and Slovakia.

"President Droupadi Murmu @rashtrapatibhvn emplanes on State visits to Portugal and the Slovak Republic. These are the first State visits to either country by the President of India in more than 25 years. The visits will further expand India's multi-faceted engagement with two

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CM Omar Abdullah Attends Cultural Heritage Event At Kashmir University



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
SRINAGAR:

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today said that Jammu and Kashmir has faced numerous challenges over the years but is now gradually emerging from these challenges. He emphasized that efforts are underway to ensure the region becomes an equal stakeholder in the country's overall develop-

ment. The Chief Minister was speaking at Lok Samvardhan Parv, being held at the University of Kashmir from April 5 to 13 under the theme 'Bhagidari se Bhagyodaya'. "Wherever support is possible and wherever proposals from our side are pending approval, I humbly request that they be considered and approved so that people of Jammu and

Kashmir can benefit," the Chief Minister said.

He was the Chief Guest at the event, which was inaugurated by Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs and Minority Affairs, Kiren Rijiju.

Minister of State for Minority Affairs, George Kurien, also attended the event. Vice Chancellor of Kashmir University, Professor Nilofer Khan, along with other senior dignitaries, was also present on the occasion. Highlighting the importance of the programme, Omar Abdullah said the event marks a new beginning in the relationship between the Ministry of Minority Affairs and Jammu & Kashmir. "This initiative offers a window into the rich

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Dr Jitendra Lauds CSIR Institutes' Pivotal Role In Drug Discovery, Genetic Diagnostics

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
HYDERABAD:

Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, has lauded Hyderabad based CSIR (Council of Scientific & Industrial Research) institutes' pivotal role in drug discovery, genetic diagnostics and developing cost-effective Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API).

The meeting was convened by the Minister to review the recent work outcomes of Hyderabad based CSIR labs, particularly after the personal impetus and patronage provided by Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the last one decade.

Directors of three premier CSIR laboratories



based in Hyderabad: CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (CSIR-ICT), CSIR-National Geophysical Research Institute (CSIR-NGRI), and CSIR-Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CSIR-CCMB). Dr. Srinivasa Reddy, Director of CSIR-ICT, briefed the Minister on the institute's pioneering contributions in advancing India's chemical and pharmaceutical sectors.

The Minister was briefed by Dr. D. Srinivasa Reddy (Director, CSIR-ICT), Dr. Prakash Kumar (Director, CSIR-NGRI) and Dr. Vinay Nandicoori (Director, CSIR-CCMB). Dr. Srinivasa Reddy, Director of CSIR-ICT, briefed the Minister on the institute's pioneering contributions in advancing India's chemical and pharmaceutical sectors.

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Wanted Gangster Arrested In J&k's Udhampur

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

A gangster, wanted by police in Jammu and Kashmir and neighbouring Punjab, was arrested in Udhampur district here on Sunday, officials said.

Amir Khan, a resident of Khoon village, was arrested in a well-coordi-

nated operation, based on reliable intelligence regarding his movement from the Majalta area, a police spokesperson said.

He said the accused, wanted in numerous criminal cases including rape, drug trafficking, attempt to murder and illegal possession

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Cyber Police Kashmir Busts Major Mule Account Network Fueling Cyber Frauds, 21 Arrested

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
SRINAGAR:

The Cyber Police Station, Kashmir Zone, Srinagar, has uncovered a vast and sophisticated network behind the creation and operation of mule bank accounts — a key enabler in large-scale cyber frauds and financial crimes.



Police said that it has identified

7,200 mule bank accounts operating from the Kashmir Valley alone, created since January 2025. As many as 21 individuals, 19 of whom belong to Srinagar district, have been arrested during the investigation of four FIRs registered by the Cyber Police. A mule bank account is an account used to receive and

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CM Omar Abdullah...

cultural diversity, handicrafts and cuisines of the country, while also providing us the opportunity to showcase our own heritage—be it our crafts, traditional cuisine or natural beauty—to the visiting guests,” he said.

The Chief Minister noted that while the Ministry of Minority Affairs may appear smaller in scope, its work holds deep national significance.

“In a country as diverse as ours—with different ways of life, multiple languages, varied cuisines and unique cultures—it is crucial to foster a sense of belonging and unity. The ministry plays a key role in ensuring that every citizen, regardless of background, feels part of the nation’s progress,” he said.

He further acknowledged that the event has enabled local artisans, including those involved in handicrafts and traditional wazwan cuisine, to showcase their exceptional talent.

“The magic in their hands is on full display. At the same time, it is heartening to see participants from across the country sharing this platform,” he added.

Referring to the tourist rush coinciding with the onset of the spring season, he said: “I understand the challenges many of you may have faced in reaching here—especially due to the traffic around the Tulip Garden. But what can we say—the charm of Kashmir draws everyone in.” The Chief Minister expressed hope that guests from across the country will carry back fond memories of the event and the valley’s hospitality.

Urging the Union Minister to continue his ministry’s support for Jammu & Kashmir, the Chief Minister said the region continues to face various challenges, including unemployment. “Your ministry’s initiatives—be it in education, skill training or market access—are vital. Our artisans work hard but struggle to reach broader markets. They face challenges in grooming the next generation for this craft, and often do not receive adequate support in skill development and training. I hope your ministry will help bridge this gap,” he said.

India now...

elevated India’s cooperative sector to global prominence, especially in the field of Nano Urea and Nano DAP, which are now being exported worldwide.

He further noted that the cooperative has enhanced its capacity, expanded its outreach to farmers’ fields, and successfully translated laboratory research into field-level applications.

Marking the foundation of the Beej Anusandhan Kendra in Gandhinagar, Shah said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has launched several innovative ventures across various sectors in the country.

He stated that under the Prime Minister’s leadership, the Ministry of Cooperation has undertaken nearly 62 unprecedented initiatives in the cooperative sector.

Shah also mentioned that Parliament recently passed a bill to establish the Tribhuvan Sahkari University, named in honour of Tribhuvandas Patel’s contributions to the cooperative movement.

He explained that this university aims to deliver modern cooperative education and ensure transparency across all cooperative levels—from Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) to apex bodies.

The Union Minister stressed the need to strengthen primary cooperative societies and cooperative dairies to fortify the nation’s cooperative institutions.

Shah shared that IFFCO currently operates production units in five locations across three states—Kandla, Kalol, Phulpur, Aonla, and Paradip.

He further revealed that the organization’s current fertilizer production capacity stands at nine million metric tons, with sales reaching 11 million metric tons. IFFCO has achieved a turnover of Rs 40,000 crore and a profit of Rs 3,200 crore.

Several dignitaries, including Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel and other notable figures, were present on the occasion.

Cyber Police Kashmir...

transfer illicit funds on behalf of others, often in return for a commission. These accounts—belonging to individuals, shell companies, and enterprises—are primarily scouted through social media platforms such as Telegram and Facebook, and are then remotely controlled by fraudsters operating from outside Jammu & Kashmir and even from overseas.

Once these accounts are set up, they are integrated into illegal payment gateways and used by criminal syndicates to collect deposits from victims on fake investment websites, offshore betting and gambling platforms, and fraudulent stock trading portals. Funds received in these mule accounts are immediately lay-

ered and diverted to other accounts or converted into cryptocurrency to obscure the money trail.

Bulk payout facilities provided by banks are also being misused in this process to distribute proceeds quickly.

These accounts typically remain active for a short span, often less than a week—before being flagged due to suspicious transactions. However, within this brief window, transactions worth crores of rupees are executed and funneled across a chain of accounts, Senior Superintendent of Police, Srinagar, Imtiyaz Hussain said during a press conference.

He said Cyber Police Kashmir has also discovered that several local kingpins are managing the operations of these accounts, acting as recruiters and handlers.

“These individuals onboard people, often from economically weaker sections, by offering commissions for account access,” he said.

SSP said in response to a request by Cyber Police Kashmir, the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (i4C), MHA, New Delhi has shared a list of 7,200 mule bank accounts operating from the Kashmir Valley alone—created since January 2025.

“This figure is expected to be much higher as the investigation progresses,” he said.

He added that the hotspots for mule account activity include areas like Mehjoor Nagar, Natipora, Nowgam, Lasjan, Padshahibagh, Nowhatta, Khanyar, Rainawari, Soura, Batmaloo, Noorbagh, Qamarwari, Parimpora, Mujgund, Bemina, among others. Similar activities have been reported in other districts including Ganderbal, Kangan, Sumbal, Bandipora, Baramulla, Pulwama, Anantnag, Kulgam, and Shopian.

Cyber Police Station Kashmir Zone, Srinagar, has strongly advised citizens not to sell or rent their bank accounts, company registration certificates, or Udhyam Aadhaar registration documents to any individual or entity. Any such involvement in laundering illicit funds could result in serious legal consequences, including arrest under provisions related to organized crime and cyber fraud.

Wanted Gangster...

“His apprehension has given a blow to criminals operating in the area and provided a sigh of relief to the local residents,” the spokesperson said.

Prez leaves on...

important EU partners,” MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal wrote on X.

During her visit to Portugal, President Murmu will meet and hold delegation-level talks with her counterpart, President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa. She will also meet Portugal’s Prime Minister, Luis Montenegro, and the President of the National Assembly, Jose Pedro Aguiar-Branco.

In Slovakia, President Murmu will hold bilateral meetings with Slovak President Peter Pellegrini and Prime Minister Robert Fico.

The president’s visit to Portugal is taking place after a gap of 27 years and comes as India and Portugal are celebrating 50 years of the re-establishment of diplomatic relations.

India and Portugal share historic and friendly bilateral ties which have evolved over the years into a modern and dynamic partnership. The visit will provide further impetus to India’s growing relations with Portugal.

Slovakia will be the first visit of the President of India in 29 years. The state visit by the president will provide an opportunity to further strengthen and broaden bilateral relations between India, Portugal and Slovakia and will also strengthen the India-EU relationship.

India Doing Better...

be negotiations and the duty structure will be stabilized.

Talking with PTI here after paying obeisance at the revered Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine atop Trikuta hills on the occasion of Ram Navami, the National Stock Exchange (NSE) chief said it seems that the Indian share market is doing much better than other countries post the US decision on reciprocal tariff.

“You must have seen the market for the last 2-3 days. America has made a decision on tax, which is applicable to every country in the world. They have also imposed new import duties for India, which is doing better than other countries,” he said.

Chauhan, who met Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on reaching Jammu Saturday evening, said a clear picture about the future strategy of America and the world will be clear in the next week.

“It seems that India’s position is a bit heavy compared to other countries,” he said.

“A situation of confusion persists as of now. Many feel that some companies may face more losses. But overall, there will be negotiations and the duty structure will be stabilized. The situation should be clear in the next one or two weeks,” he said.

Key stock market indices Sensex and Nifty declined over 2.5 per cent last week, dragged primarily by weak global cues and renewed concerns over a trade war after the US tariffs.

Dr Jitendra Lauds...

The institute has also developed safer and more effective agrochemicals, and its work in catalysis has led to novel catalysts for hydrogenation, oxidation, and polymerization processes used widely in industrial applications.

Dr. Reddy highlighted CSIR-IICTs key achievements including the development of compostable plastics in association with GreenWorksBio. He also highlighted the development of Hydrazine Hydrate in collaboration with Gujarat Alkalies and Chemicals Limited (GACL). In the domain of sustainable technologies, the institute’s Anaerobic Gas Lift Reactor (AGR) technology enables efficient conversion of biodegradable waste into biogas and bio-manure.

Dr. Vinay Nandicoori, Director of CSIR-CCMB, elaborated on the institute’s accomplishments in molecular biology, genetic diagnostics, and biotechnological innovation. He highlighted that CCMB was the first Indian institution to develop DNA fingerprinting technology, which has had a lasting impact on forensic investigations and legal proceedings in the country. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the institute responded swiftly by developing indigenous diagnostic kits, surveillance systems, and even advancing mRNA vaccine technologies.

One of CCMB’s most impactful initiatives has been its work on sickle cell anemia, under which it developed a highly sensitive, low-cost diagnostic kit as part of the National Sickle Cell Elimination Mission.

The institute is also engaged in research on diseases like tuberculosis and encephalitis and has launched India’s first rare disease registry to better understand the genetic basis of uncommon disorders. Through its Atal Incubation Centre (AIC-CCMB), the institute has nurtured more than 160 startups working on biotech innovations in healthcare, agriculture, and environmental sustainability.

In the realm of conservation, CCMB continues to lead studies on the genetic diversity of endangered species, such as tigers and olive ridley turtles, and supports wildlife forensics to curb illegal poaching and trade. Dr. Nandicoori emphasized the institute’s dual commitment to fundamental research and societal application, bridging deep science with real-world outcomes.

Dr. Prakash Kumar, Director of CSIR-NGRI, presented the institute’s significant achievements in earth sciences, particularly in the areas of seismic hazard mapping, resource exploration, and infrastructure support. He noted that NGRI has developed India’s first strain map to assess earthquake vulnerability in the Himalayan and Indo-Gangetic regions, a critical step toward national disaster preparedness. The institute is also conducting deep seismic profiling under a national program aimed at decoding the crustal structure of central India, which holds implications for both tectonic studies and mineral exploration. NGRI’s work on geothermal energy, particularly in Ladakh and Chhattisgarh, has opened new frontiers for clean and renewable energy.

Dr. Jitendra Singh appreciated the vital role played by the CSIR laboratories in driving scientific innovation, supporting national missions, and contributing to India’s goal of becoming a self-reliant knowledge economy. He emphasized the importance of science-based solutions for national development, especially in addressing societal challenges and promoting sustainability. The Minister said that Hyderabad has emerged as a thriving ecosystem for scientific research, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

In light of the contributions of these three institutes during the meeting it was decided to organize a CSIR Startup Conclave in Hyderabad. The event, scheduled for April 22-23, 2025, aims to facilitate collaboration between research institutions and startups, and promote entrepreneurship in India. The conclave will be organized jointly by CSIR-IICT, CSIR-NGRI, and CSIR-CCMB.

Dr. Jitendra Singh reiterated the Modi government’s commitment to fostering a culture of innovation, commercialization, and self-reliance in science and technology.

SBI RSETI Ramban hosts "Soft Toys Maker & Seller" Training Programme at Dhalwas

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
RAMBAN:

State Bank of India's Rural Self Employment Training Institute (SBI RSETI) Ramban continues its mission to empower rural communities by organising a Soft Toys Maker & Seller training Programme at Heman Karma (Dhalwas) village.

The inauguration ceremony was held with great enthusiasm and amid participation from local trainees and community members.

The event commenced with the lighting of traditional lamp by Director SBI RSETI Ramban Harvinder Singh. In his inaugural address, the Director emphasized the importance of skill-based training in today's competitive world and encouraged the trainees, especially women, to take full advantage of the opportunity provided by RSETI.

The Director highlighted how SBI RSETI continues to support self-reliance by offering free training, boarding, and lodging facilities. He also elaborated on post-training



handholding support and assistance in accessing bank credit for those interested in starting their ventures.

The ceremony concluded with a heartfelt vote of thanks and the signature RSETI Claps, led by Faculty Member Sh. Rakesh Kumar, symbolizing unity, energy, and collective motivation of the group.

The 10-day training program aims to equip local participants with practical skills in designing, stitching, and marketing soft toys. Participants will also be guided on entrepreneurship fundamentals, pricing, branding, and linking with local markets or exhibitions for product sales.

DSEJ reviews implementation of intervention schemes in Jammu Division Schools

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

Director School Education Jammu Dr. Naseem Javaid Chowdhary today chaired the maiden meeting with the officials of Jammu Division to review the implementation of intervention schemes and components across the districts.

The Director stressed to ensure the academic excellence in Government Schools and called for effective implementation of the recommendations of NEP2020 in the stipulated time frame. He also highlighted the importance of experiential and inquiry-based learning and the role of technology in improving education. The discussions encompassed the issues related to Human Resource Management with special



focus on RETs, Contingent Paid Workers, Timely conduct of DPCs and one time exemption to officials who acquired higher qualification without permission. Directions were issued for timely action/ resolution on all these matters.

The Director directed the CEO to ensure the availability of all the Basic facilities like Drinking Water & Toilet, Electricity and other facilities in schools in their respective districts. Other significant

issues/points like teacher training, student performance, Court Cases, and the development of kindergartens were also discussed.

The DSEJ stressed the need to improve academic standards and ensure quality education for all students. The Chief Education Officers provided updates about their districts, discussed the current status of schools, teachers and students, along with challenges being faced by them in the district.

Echoes of Eternity: Radio Udhampur 89.2 FM "Dil Ki Awaaz" starts broadcast



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
UDHAMPUR:

In a landmark moment for Udhampur district, Deputy Commissioner Saloni Rai, alongside

DIG Udhampur-Reasi Range, Rayees Mohammad Bhat, inaugurated the Community Radio Station Udhampur 89.2 FM "Dil Ki Awaaz" here today.

While briefing the media, the

Deputy Commissioner extended her heartfelt congratulations to the people of Udhampur, stating that it is a proud and historic moment for the district. She expressed her optimism about the station's future and its role in strengthening community ties.

The DC added that this community radio station will serve as a platform to celebrate the rich local heritage, amplify the voices of the people and bring to light inspiring stories from local artists, storytellers said the DC.

She emphasized that the station will not only entertain but also inform, educate, and empower the local populace by providing them with a vibrant and inclusive medium of expression. She further urged the citizens of Udhampur to make the most of this valuable platform by sharing their stories, dreams and aspirations.

Monthly Baithak Organized by the Music Deptt, IMFA, University of Jammu

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

The Music Department of the Institute of Music and Fine Arts (IMFA), University of Jammu, organized its monthly Baithak today at the Department of Dance, celebrating the rich cultural traditions of Indian classical arts.

The event was graced by esteemed Chief Guests Sh. Suresh Sharma, retired Session Judge, social worker, and receiver of Panchvaktar Mahadev Mandir, along with his wife, Prof. Shruti Sharma, a prominent educationist. Sh. Deepak Kumar, renowned theatre artist, attended as the Special Guest. The occasion began with a solemn tribute to Padma Shri Manoj Kumar, the legendary film actor popularly known as Bharat Kumar, who passed away earlier today.

The Baithak commenced on a spiritual note as Vedic students from Panchvaktar Mahadev Mandir presented an enlightening Ved Path, emphasizing the deep connection between Indian classical music and the Vedas, especially the Samaveda, which laid the foundation of musical notes and rhythm in Indian tradition. These sacred chants not only bring spiritual elevation but also stand as the earliest documented examples of structured sound and melody. This was followed by a series of vibrant performances by students from various departments.

Poojan Kumar presented a soulful vocal recital, while Raghav accompanied on the Tanpura. Danish Verma captivated the audience with his Sitar performance, and Hilal Farooq played a mesmerizing piece on the Violin. The rhythmic synergy of Peeyush Verma and Varun Kalotra on Tabla added depth to the performances, complemented by Jatin Kumar on Harmonium. In the dance segment, Sonia and Manu showcased their expressive movements.

The event was eloquently anchored by Pragya Sharma. The aura of the occasion was enhanced by the Ved Path recitation by Rudransh, Naksh, Samarth, Rishi, Akhil, Rahul, Vidushi, Vishal, Partiksh, and Krishna. The welcome address was delivered by Sh. Rajkumar Sharma, who emphasized the significance of sustaining these monthly cultural gatherings. The Vote of Thanks was presented by Dr. Priya Dutta, Head of the Music Department, who highlighted how she, along with dedicated faculty members and with the support of Principal Prof. Shohab Malik, is working towards reviving and nurturing this age-old tradition of Baithak in an institutional setting.

Sh. Suresh Sharma, in his address, appreciated the efforts of the Music Department and encouraged the students to continue their artistic pursuits with dedication. He remarked, "It is heartening to see young artists deeply engaged in preserving our classical heritage. Such platforms are vital in fostering a cultural renaissance."

Sh. Deepak Kumar, speaking on the occasion, emphasized the vital role of the IMFA Music Department in propagating, promoting, and spreading awareness about our rich cultural heritage among the masses.

DC Shopian visits Mughal Road; inspects ongoing snow clearance operations

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
SHOPIAN:

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta today visited various stretches of historical Mughal Road enroute Per Ki Gali to take stock of the snow clearance operations for reopening of the vital link connecting Kashmir valley with Pir Panjal region.

During the visit, DC assessed the pace of the ongoing work being undertaken by the Mechanical Engineering Department, Shopian. It was informed that more men and machinery have been pressed into service for early snow clearance.

Emphasizing the importance of the arterial road, DC directed AEE to expedite the clearance process and ensure the road is made traffic-worthy at the earliest.

He also stressed on maintaining safety protocols and deploying adequate machinery to speed up the work.

The reopening of the Mughal Road is eagerly awaited as it plays a crucial role in regional connectivity, especially during the summer months.

DC finalises arrangements for Ram Navmi celebration in Kishtwar



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
KISHTWAR:

Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Kumar Shavan convened a meeting with officers from the line departments to review and finalize the arrangements for the Ram Navmi festival.

Representatives from the Sanatan Dharma Sabha shared valuable suggestions regarding key aspects of festival preparations. They sought special provision for sanitation, electricity and water supply, traffic management and adequate availability of ration supplies.

The Deputy Commissioner emphasized the critical importance of maintaining cleanliness and hygiene during the festivities. He directed the concerned departments to actively promote sanitation efforts including lime lining at festive venues, especially in and around temples. Additionally, the DC instructed officials to visit temples to assess the ground situation and ensure readiness. The SSP was asked to make comprehensive security arrangements at temples across the district to ensure the safety of the devotees.

The meeting also underscored the need for seamless interdepartmental coordination to facilitate smooth festival celebrations. The Jal Shakti and Power Development Department (PDD) was asked to take all necessary measures to provide seamless services. The Executive Engineer PDD was tasked with ensuring proper lighting arrangements in addition to consistent power supply.

Tehsildar Kishtwar was instructed to monitor the rates and quality of food items sold during the festival through regular market checks.

The Health Department was directed to make adequate provisions for medical facilities, including the deployment of medical staff, to handle any emergency situations.

The meeting also discussed arrangements for fool-proof traffic management during festive processions, stage settings, and other safety measures.

DC Shopian directs immediate reparation of Narwah Road



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
SHOPIAN:

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta today assessed the condition of damaged segment of road at Narwah & directed concerned agencies for immediate reparations. While visiting the site, DC took stock of the identified stretches that require immediate reparation work to facilitate the smooth movement of transportation.

Emphasizing the importance of road connectivity for local commuters, DC directed the concerned departments, including R&B Department and PMGSY to coordinate with PC Division looking after the NH 444 and expedite execution of necessary repair and maintenance works.

He also interacted with locals, who projected their grievances & demands regarding different issues.

While assuring prompt redressal, DC reiterated the administration's commitment to infrastructure development and responsive governance.

ADC, Dr Zakir Hussain Faaz, officers and other officials accompanied DC during the inspection.

DC Poonch inspects Patient Care facilities at SDH Mendhar

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
MENDHAR:

Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Vikas Kundal on Saturday inspected the healthcare facilities and infrastructure at the Sub District Hospital (SDH) Mendhar.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner reviewed achievements under various Health Sector Schemes and assessed the functioning of the health institution. He inspected key sections, including the Emergency Ward, OPD, IPD, Registration Counter, Jan Aushadi Kendra, and the Laboratory section.

DC Kundal engaged with hospital staff to gain firsthand insights into operations and the healthcare services offered to patients. He emphasized the importance of upgrading infrastructure, including improving seating arrangements for patients and their attendants during waiting times, as well as procuring necessary machinery.

He requested department heads to submit detailed requirements to address any issues promptly.

Additionally, the Deputy



Commissioner interacted with patients to gather feedback on the healthcare services provided.

He visited the Jan Aushadi Kendra to assess medicine availability and instructed staff to increase stock levels to ensure optimal patient care.

Kundal urged healthcare functionaries to meet patients' expecta-

tions by focusing on quality assurance and providing accessible, affordable healthcare services.

During his visit, the Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by several key officials, including SDM Mendhar, Imran Kataria, CMO Poonch Dr. Parvaiz Ahmed Khan, Tehsildar Mendhar; Rahul Basotra and other officers.

DC Samba directs for strict implementation of PCPNDT Act



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
SAMBA:

In a significant move to strengthen regulatory oversight of ultrasound clinics and prevent sex determination procedures, Deputy Commissioner Rajesh Sharma today chaired a crucial review meeting of the District Advisory Committee (DAC) on the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (PCPNDT) Act here at the DC Office Complex.

The meeting commenced with Chief Medical Officer Dr. Vidhi Bhatial presenting detailed insights

on regulatory measures adopted by the Health Department to ensure compliance with the Act across registered ultrasound facilities in the district. Deputy Commissioner Sharma emphasized that preventing sex-selective practices remains a top priority for the district administration. "Regular and random inspections of ultrasound clinics must be conducted to ensure strict adherence to all provisions of the PCPNDT Act," directed the DC, who also serves as Chairman of the District Advisory Committee.

In a strategic approach to enhance grassroots vigilance, the DC pro-

posed that future DAC meetings be conducted in areas identified as vulnerable to violations. He also recommended developing more effective awareness tools and increasing community participation through active involvement of Committee members.

The meeting witnessed participation from key officials representing stakeholder departments including Health, Social Welfare and Legal Advisory, who collectively pledged to intensify efforts to eliminate sex-selective practices through rigorous implementation of the Act.

The Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act aims to prevent the misuse of prenatal diagnostic procedures for sex determination, which can lead to female feticide. The Act prohibits sex selection before or after conception and regulates prenatal diagnostic techniques for detecting genetic or metabolic disorders or chromosomal abnormalities.

DC assess civic amenities at RamKund Temple in Village Chajjla- Poonch

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
POONCH:

Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal, today visited the revered Ram Kund Temple located in the Chajjla village of the Mendhar subdivision.

During the visit, DC was accompanied by SDM Mendhar, Imran Kataria; CMO Poonch, Dr. Parvaiz Ahmed Khan; Tehsildars Rahul Basotra and Maroof along with other officials.

During the visit, Deputy Commissioner Kundal paid his respects at the temple, offering



prayers and extending his wishes for peace and prosperity in the region.

The Deputy Commissioner interacted with the temple management committee, which presented various demands, seeking road improve-

ments and basic civic facilities.

In response, he directed the concerned to prioritize the resolution of these issues to enhance the experience for devotees and preserve the cultural heritage of the area.

Drive Launched to boost enrollments in Government Schools of Poonch District



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
POONCH:

In a decisive effort to enhance enrollment in government schools for the academic session 2025-26, an intensive drive was today launched across the Poonch district.

The initiative is being carried out under the visionary guidance of Chief Education Officer (CEO) Iftikhar Ali Shah Kazmi, with active participation from school teachers, students and local communities.

The drive aims to raise awareness among parents and guardians about the improved facilities, quality education, and child-friendly environ-

ment offered in government schools. Special focus is being given to remote and underprivileged areas to ensure equitable access to education for all children.

In the Kanuyian Zone, Zonal Education Officer (ZEO) Maqbool Hussain has been monitoring the enrollment activities. A noteworthy initiative was undertaken by the staff and students of Government Middle School Dhant, located in one of the remotest villages of the zone. The school organized a community outreach rally, where students and teachers walked through various hamlets of the Dhant village, distributing pamphlets and engaging with

villagers to spread awareness about the benefits of government schooling. During the campaign, emphasis was laid on the various student-centric initiatives introduced in government schools, such as the availability of dedicated Aayas in pre-primary sections to care for kindergarten children, provision of free textbooks, uniforms, nutritious mid-day meals, scholarships, and a safe and inclusive learning environment. These measures have significantly improved enrollment and retention rates, especially in early childhood education.

The Chief Education officer highlighted that the appointment of Aayas in schools with pre-primary classes has proven to be a transformative step, encouraging parents to enroll their young children with confidence. "We are committed to creating an enabling learning atmosphere and will continue to upgrade infrastructure and support services to attract and retain students," he said.

He further urged all headmasters, teachers, and educational stakeholders to actively participate in the enrollment drive and ensure no child is left out of the schooling system. "It is our collective responsibility to strengthen the foundation of education in the district and make quality education accessible to every child," he added.

Intramural Competitions held in schools at Kishtwar

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
KISHTWAR:

In a remarkable effort to promote physical fitness, mental well-being, and the spirit of healthy competition, the District Youth Services & Sports Department today organized Intramural Competitions for Higher Secondary School Boys, High School Bandrena, and Middle School Indiranagar.

The competitions featured three dynamic disciplines—Volleyball, Chess, and Yoga—with enthusiastic participation from students across all academic levels.

This initiative is part of the depart-

ment's ongoing commitment to fostering holistic development through active youth engagement in co-curricular activities.

The Volleyball matches showcased thrilling performances, with teams from all three schools demonstrating exceptional skills, teamwork, and strategic coordination.

In the Chess tournaments, students exhibited sharp intellect and strategic prowess, highlighting the importance of mental agility alongside physical sports.

The Yoga sessions emphasized flexibility, mindfulness, and stress management, reinforcing the significance of mental health and holistic

well-being among young minds.

The events were conducted under the vigilant supervision of trained physical education instructors and sports officials, ensuring strict adherence to sportsmanship and competition rules. The organizing committee ensured all necessary arrangements, including safety protocols, sports equipment, and refreshments, for a seamless experience.

These intramural competitions not only served as a refreshing break from academic routines but also instilled vital values such as perseverance, discipline, leadership, and teamwork.

Indian Army Conducts Medical Patrol for Gujjar and Bakarwal Communities in Rajouri

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
RAJOURI:

In keeping with its ethos of service, professionalism, and compassion, the Indian Army organized a medical patrol in the remote villages of Gulair, Chapta, and Sarsoti in Rajouri district. The initiative was aimed at extending medical assistance to the underserved Gujjar and Bakarwal communities residing in these far-flung areas.

The medical patrol provided much-needed healthcare services to 87 villagers, including 39 men, 29 women, and 19 children from Gulair and nearby areas.

Residents availed free medical consultations, treatment, and medi-

cines, all facilitated by a dedicated team of Indian Army doctors and medical representatives.

The initiative is part of the Indian Army's continuous efforts to reach out to the people living in remote and difficult terrains, where access to basic healthcare remains a significant challenge. These patrols are conducted with the objective of addressing immediate medical needs while also creating awareness about hygiene, disease prevention, and general health.

During the patrol, patients were examined for a variety of common ailments, including seasonal infections, joint pain, skin diseases, and nutritional deficiencies. Children were also assessed for signs of mal-

nutrition and given appropriate supplements. Medicines were distributed free of cost to all patients based on their diagnosis, ensuring no one returned without support.

The Indian Army's humane approach and commitment to public welfare were once again recognized and appreciated by the local populace.

The residents expressed heartfelt gratitude to the Army for bringing healthcare to their doorsteps and for being a constant pillar of support in times of need. Many villagers emphasized how such initiatives build strong bonds of trust between the Army and civilians, and contribute to the overall development and well-being of the region.

Joint Secretary, Ministry of Power reviews JPDCL's progress under RDSS

Hindu Temple Board should be formed for the maintenance of Hindu temples : Vikrant



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

Shashank Misra, Joint Secretary Distribution, Ministry of Power (MoP) and Shri Rahul Dwivedi, visited Jammu to review the functioning of the Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited (JPDCL) and assess the progress of works under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS).

During the meeting, Managing Director JPDCL, Sh. Yasin M. Choudhary, provided a detailed briefing on the achievements, challenges, and implementation status of RDSS. Representatives from NTPC, PESL, RECPDCL, and other key stakeholders also participated, sharing insights on work prioritization and the need for re-evaluating on-ground conditions that have contributed to increased execution costs. The Joint Secretary acknowledged JPDCL's commitment and proactive approach in tackling project challenges while ensuring steady progress. It was noted that despite facing hurdles, JPDCL has remained focused on optimizing resources and prioritizing high-loss areas to maximize RDSS benefits.

The Joint Secretary commended JPDCL's emphasis on efficiency-enhancing measures, such as feeder segregation and adjustments in pole quantities for reconductoring works, which are expected to significantly reduce technical losses and improve system reliability. Additionally, concerns were raised regarding the slow progress of smart metering. M/s Genus, the implementing agency. The Joint Secretary directed RECPDCL to take immediate corrective measures and enhance monitoring to ensure the timely completion of smart metering targets. The meeting also reviewed the status of loss reduction works, pending payments to Turnkey Contractors (TKCs), and compliance with pre-qualification requirements. The Joint Secretary lauded JPDCL's continuous efforts in executing RDSS initiatives and urged all stakeholders to further accelerate implementation to achieve the scheme's objectives.

Farewell accorded to outgoing ACR at Doda



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
DODA:

The District Administration Doda today bid a warm farewell to Assistant Commissioner Revenue Sunil Bhutyal on his transfer and promotion as Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Bhaderwah.

Bidding him farewell, officers and staff gathered to convey their best wishes, expressing confidence that he will continue to serve with the same passion and integrity in his new role.

His promotion is seen as a well-deserved recognition of his competence and unwavering dedication to public service.

Rajouri admin mulls to take up tourism, other projects on Public-Private Partnership mode



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
RAJOURI:

Additional District Development Commissioner, Dr. Raj Kumar Thapa today convened a meeting to discuss the projects proposed to be undertaken under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode.

The meeting, held in the office chamber of the ADDC, focused on exploring the feasibility of the developmental projects aimed at enhancing tourism, infrastructure, and public amenities in the district.

Dr. Thapa emphasized the urgent need for a comprehensive pre-feasibility study for each proposed project to assess their viability under the PPP model.

The projects discussed during the meeting included Ropeway from Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah Shrine at Shahdara to Seeri, Ropeway from Shakar Marg Darhal to Seven Lakes, Construction of a Modern Tourist Reception Centre (TRC) with Cafeteria, Parking, Public Convenience Services (PCS), Shopping Complex at Shahdara Sharief, Construction of a Modern TRC with similar facilities at Tatapani Barmandal, Development of a Modern Park at Alpha Gate Phalyana & construction of a Cinema Hall and Multi-Storey Car Parking Facility in Rajouri Town.

Dr. Thapa directed the concerned departments to submit detailed feasibility reports for each project, clearly outlining the potential benefits and sustainability of implementing them under the PPP framework. The ADDC reiterated the administration's commitment to exploring innovative solutions for infrastructure development, with a focus on public-private collaboration to boost tourism and economic growth in the district.

The meeting was attended by GM DIC, Fareed Ahmed Kohli; Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Sheraz Chouhan; Chief Planning Officer, Maqsood Ahmed; Assistant Commissioner Development, Vijay Kumar Verma; Executive Engineer, Sardar Khan; Executive Officer Municipality, Yousaf ul Umar; and Tourist Officer, Mumtaz Ahmed.

CoF Srinagar holds meeting to combat rising forest fires

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
SRINAGAR:

A meeting focussing on forest fire prevention and management was held under the chairmanship of Conservator of Forests, (CoF) Srinagar Circle, Tawheed Ahmad Deva at Sheikhbagh Forest Complex in Srinagar today.

The meeting was attended by Joint Director Forest Protection Force, Kashmir, all Divisional Forest Officers of Srinagar Circle and all Deputy Directors of Forest Protection Force and Wildlife Wardens of Kashmir Region.

The primary agenda was to address the recent forest fires that have impacted various forest divisions within the Kashmir Region.

The meeting conducted a thorough review of the current situation, analyzed the causes of the fires, and strategized on enhanced prevention and mitigation measures. "The protection of our forests is paramount," stated the CoF Srinagar. He added that the department is committed to implement proactive measures to safeguard these vital ecosystems and ensure the safety of our communities.

During the meeting, it was emphasized that all forest fire control rooms across the districts are operating round the clock. The key strategies discussed and adopted in the meeting include, Intensifying efforts to educate the public on fire safety and the importance of preventing forest fires, enhancing surveillance and monitoring to detect and respond to potential fire hazards promptly.

MoHFW, JK Health deptt hold national review meeting on Shri Amarnathji Pilgrimage

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
SRINAGAR:

The Department of Health & Medical Education, in collaboration with the Union Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), conducted the national review meeting for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY) 2025 here today.

The key stakeholders, senior officials and experts attended the meeting to review the past experiences, discuss preparedness and enhance the coordination framework for medical services during the forthcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra..

Secretary, Health & Medical Education (H&ME), Dr. Syed Abid Rashid Shah, who chaired the crucial meeting, highlighted the government's commitment towards ensuring a robust healthcare system for the pilgrims.

He emphasized the need for streamlining the process of issuance of Compulsory Health Certificates to the pilgrims. He asked for putting in efforts to ensure that the certificates are issued only after thoroughly assessing the health status of the intending pilgrim. This measure will help in curbing the morbidity and mortality rate, save numerous lives, he added.

Secretary Health also appreciated the states for deputing specialists and medical officers for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra duties over the years. He expressed hope that the states and the Government of India



institutions depute the staff as per the requisitioned numbers for the forthcoming Yatra 2025. He focused on the requirement of Cardiologists, Respiratory Physicians and Anesthetists.

The meeting was followed by release of the Yatra Booklet and distribution of certificates of appreciation among the States and MoHFW.

The States/MoHFW Institutions that participated included Delhi, Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Telangana, Maharashtra, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana and West Bengal.

Prominent national level institutions who participated in the meeting included AIIMS of New Delhi, Raipur, Jodhpur, Bhubaneswar Patna, Bhopal and Rishikesh, PGIMER Chandigarh, JIPMER

Puducherry as well as Banaras Hindu University Medical College, RML Hospital, LHMC, Safdergung Hospitals, New Delhi and Aligarh Muslim University Medical College.

Additionally, SKIMS Medical College and Government Medical Colleges of Jammu, Srinagar, Anantnag participated in the meet.

The meeting featured a comprehensive overview of Emergency Medical Response (EMR) activities presented by Dr. L Swasticharan, Additional DDG & Director EMR, MoHFW. He outlined the emergency response strategies and best practices.

Dr. Sujata Chaudhary, Additional Director General Health Services, MoHFW, further elaborated on national level coordination efforts to enhance the medical response mechanisms for SANJY.

Indian Army Conducts Awareness Lecture for Youth at Parori Gujjaran, Rajouri

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
RAJOURI:

In a significant initiative aimed at empowering the youth and enhancing public awareness, the Indian Army organized an awareness and guidance lecture at Parori Gujjaran village in District Rajouri. The program focused on educating the local population, especially the youth, about various government welfare schemes and how to benefit from them.

The awareness session highlighted key schemes like 'Aapki Beti Hamari Beti', which is designed to promote the welfare and development of the girl child. The initiative includes provisions for nutrition, healthcare, and education support for girl children and pregnant women, ensuring a better quality of life and promoting gender equality in the region.

Another important scheme discussed was the Harihar Scheme, which aims at promoting agricultural growth and ensuring the welfare of farmers. The lecture emphasized the importance of increasing awareness about these schemes in rural areas, where people often remain uninformed about their rights and entitlements due to lack of access to information.

The lecture also covered critical elements for the success of such government programs, including proper evaluation mechanisms, local acceptability, and last-mile



implementation. The Army officers stressed that effective communication between the government and beneficiaries is vital to ensure that these schemes truly make a difference in people's lives.

Local residents, particularly the youth, participated actively in the event. Many expressed their appreciation for the Indian Army's outreach efforts, acknowledging the need for such educational engagements in remote regions. They also raised queries related to the procedures for availing benefits, to which the Army officials responded with clarity and assurance.

This awareness drive reflects the Indian Army's continued commitment to nation-building beyond security roles, acting as a bridge

between the government and the public. It also aligns with the broader objective of the Government of India to disseminate information about public welfare initiatives, as emphasized in recent communications from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

By conducting such lectures, the Indian Army is not only fostering community engagement but also strengthening trust between the armed forces and the civilians. The successful turnout and positive feedback from attendees suggest a growing awareness and enthusiasm among locals to take advantage of development programs meant for their betterment.

39 GTC & Varanasi Cantonment's Transformation: A Model in Sustainability, Innovation, And Community Development

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
NEW DELHI:

In a remarkable year of focused effort and synergy, 39 Gorkha Training Centre (39 GTC) and Varanasi Military station have set new benchmarks in sustainability and community welfare. Under the combined leadership of the Army Wives Welfare Association (AWWA) and the Residents Welfare Association (RWA), an array of eco-friendly innovations has reshaped Varanasi Cantonment into a cleaner, greener, and more dynamic environment. This milestone transformation aligns seamlessly with the broader mandates of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and the Fit India Movement.

Ban on Single-Use Plastics and 'Thaila Ghars' Early last year, the AWWA banned single-use plastic and polythene. 'Thaila Ghars' have been introduced to provide cloth bags made from donated fabric at station gates and shops, thereby reducing reliance on plastics. In tandem, 'Boxes of Kindness' collect clothing and toys for underprivileged recipients, with unusable garments repurposed into additional cloth bags for widespread use.

Waste Management at the Source

To strengthen good waste-management practices, a robust Information, Education, and Communication (IEC) campaign has cemented segregation at the household level. Blue, Green, and red bins are allocated for wet, dry, and bio-hazardous waste respectively. Battery-operated collection vehicles begin their rounds at dawn, broadcasting Swachh Bharat messages and minimising



dependence on roadside bins. This approach ensures safer disposal and better protection for sanitation workers.

Incentivising Responsible Disposal

A distinctive scheme of Waste Credit Points has allowed residents to deposit wrappers and plastics at a specialised 'Plastic Kachra Bank', offsetting the manufacturing costs of various products. Furthermore, a Memorandum of Understanding with SHYNA ECO UNIFIED enables discarded wrappers to be purchased at INR 5 per kilogram, with instant UPI payments that encourage digital transactions.

Conservation Projects and Zero-Waste Initiatives

Integrated conservation efforts have yielded remarkable outcomes. Interlocking PET tiles, made from waste plastic, provide durable, anti-skid walkways. Eco-bricks made from polythene are used to build benches, sculptures, and seating areas, showcasing a functional circular economy. Meanwhile, bio-toilets constructed from recycled plastic sheets feature bio-

digesters that convert waste into usable water.

Creation of a 'Green Auditorium'

Addressing a longstanding need for a communal venue, 39 GTC revitalised older barracks to create a fully air-conditioned, solar-powered auditorium overlooking "Phewa Taal." Equipped with a 55 KW rooftop solar project (including 30 kW off-grid), the facility reduces electricity costs and offers a comfortable setting for film screenings, lectures, and gatherings, free from humidity and intrusive noise.

Harnessing Solar Energy and Battery-Operated Fleet

Rooftops and vacant areas within the cantonment have been surveyed for optimal solar-panel placements. A broad fleet of zero-emission vehicles now includes garbage-collection e-vehicles, mini fire tenders, pump platforms, garden-squad vans, e-bakery vans, e-carts, e-ambulances, e-scooters, and e-cycles, significantly lowering the cantonment's carbon footprint.

This integrated effort recognises Varanasi's critical pollution levels, as flagged by the CPCB and

WHO.

Modern, Eco-Friendly Facilities

Renovation of 38 toilet-washroom complexes follows green-building principles, focusing on ventilation, water conservation, and hygiene. Food packaging waste, Tetra Packs, and wrappers are processed into fire-retardant 'plast ply' sheets used for sentry posts and launderette roofs. A 1000 L/h Reverse Osmosis plant in family lines eliminates the need for individual units, and the 'Green Laundrette' demonstrates how to recycle RO discharge water efficiently. A refreshed JCO/OR Transit Facility provides modern, morale-boosting amenities for personnel.

Holistic Water and Waste Solutions

Filtration tanks with iron grids and twin-chambers of charcoal and sand remove debris from incoming sewage, while Gambusia fish control mosquito larvae. Flow from the railway STP powers turbines that generate hydroelectricity for a natural walkway. Updated cookhouses, strengthened by weigh-and-account procedures, reduce wastage and employ bi-methanation to convert kitchen refuse into LPG. Used cooking oil, collected under a separate MoU, is repurposed for other utility products.

Enhancing Comfort and Hygiene

A solar-hybrid bathing system ensures hot showers for trainees during severe winters, thus preventing skin ailments. Overhead covers allow effective drying of clothes in damp conditions, and a modern laundrette, steaming garments in boiling water, helps minimise contagions.

Amit Shah's visit will boost morale of BJP cadre in J&K: Kavinder Gupta



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

Senior BJP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister, Kavinder Gupta has said that the upcoming visit of Union Home Minister Amit Shah to Jammu and Kashmir from April 6 will immensely boost the morale of party workers and reaffirm the party's unwavering commitment to the development and integration of the Union Territory with the national mainstream.

In a statement issued here on Thursday, Kavinder has welcomed the three-day visit of the Union Home Minister and said that Amit Shah's consistent engagement with the people of Jammu and Kashmir reflects the Modi Government's sincere approach towards ensuring lasting peace, prosperity, and progress in the region.

"Amit Shah ji is not only the architect of a new dawn in J&K post-abrogation of Article 370, but also a source of inspiration for lakhs of BJP workers across the Union Territory. His presence and guidance will rejuvenate the cadre at the grassroots level and strengthen our resolve to work for a new and empowered Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

The senior BJP leader said that the Home Minister's visit comes at a crucial juncture when the region is witnessing a surge in infrastructure development, employment generation initiatives, and growing faith in democratic processes.

Kavinder expressed confidence that Amit Shah's interactions during the visit will send a clear message of accountability, development-centric governance, and a strong stance against terrorism and separatism. "The people of Jammu and Kashmir have full faith in the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amit Shah. This visit will reaffirm that their aspirations are at the core of BJP's governance model," he added.

The former Deputy CM urged party workers to wholeheartedly welcome the Union Home Minister and utilize this opportunity to convey the aspirations and concerns of the people from every corner of Jammu and Kashmir.

SANJY 2025: DC Bandipora visits Transit Camp Sumbal, reviews facilities



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
BANDIPORA:

In view of the upcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY) 2025, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri today visited the Transit camp Shadipora Sumbal to take stock of the facilities being put in place for the smooth and safe conduct of the Yatra.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner inspected the infrastructure at the site and reviewed arrangements related to accommodation, sanitation, drinking water, electricity, medical care, and security for the Yatris.

He laid special emphasis on ensuring the availability of essential services round-the-clock, besides maintaining proper hygiene and cleanliness at the Transit Camp. The DC directed the concerned departments to work in close coordination and ensure timely completion of all works related to the Yatra preparations.

Floriculture Deptt. Kashmir launches Capacity Building Program for Growers

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

SRINAGAR, APRIL 05: In a significant initiative to empower floriculture growers and entrepreneurs, the Directorate of Floriculture, Kashmir launched a comprehensive Training, Exposure, and Interaction Program for the year 2025-26.

The program is aimed at equipping stakeholders across Kashmir with advanced skills, fostering innovation, and promoting sustainable practices in the floriculture sector.

The initiative includes a series of expert-led workshops, interactive sessions, and exposure visits.

Some of the major components include Advanced Cultivation

Training, Pest and Disease Management, Water Use Efficiency, Best Cultural Practices, Market Connectivity, New Varieties Exposure and Networking Opportunities.

The initiative aims to improve livelihoods and boost floriculture as a sustainable industry, promote eco-friendly cultivation methods, enhance the competitiveness of Kashmir's floriculture sector in both domestic and international markets and encourage entrepreneurship and innovation.

The training programs and exposure visits will be held monthly at the Directorate and district levels, following a detailed calendar to be released by the Directorate. Growers

and entrepreneurs are encouraged to actively participate as per the schedule.

This initiative reflects the Floriculture department's commitment to supporting the floriculture community with modern techniques, resilience-building, and market readiness.

For registration or further information, contact, the Directorate of Floriculture, Kashmir can be reached at (Email: kashflori@rediffmail.com) and (Phone: 0194-2474234 | Toll-Free: 1800-180-7201). Meanwhile, the Directorate invites all floriculture stakeholders to take part in this opportunity and contribute to the growth of the floriculture industry in the Valley.

THE KASHMIR TALK

EDITORIAL

SC Slams Verdict

The Supreme Court on Wednesday stayed the shocking, insensitive and inhuman order of the Allahabad High Court which said that holding the private parts of a minor girl, breaking the string of her pyjama and trying to drag her under a culvert does not fall under the category of the crime of attempted rape. Significantly, the Allahabad High Court in its order dated March 17, 2025 had said that such acts would prima facie constitute the crime of 'aggravated sexual assault' under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO), which provides for lesser punishment. The case pertains to an 11-year-old girl in Kasganj, who was attacked by two men in 2021. This decision of the High Court was under controversy from the very beginning and legal experts had hoped that this decision would be overturned in a proper manner and justice would be done. In the suo motu proceedings initiated on the controversial remarks made in the Allahabad High Court order, the Supreme Court also issued notice to the Center, Uttar Pradesh government and others. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta also said that it was a shocking decision. The apex court said that the High Court did not pronounce the decision suddenly but after keeping it reserved for about four months. This means that the judge pronounced the decision after proper deliberation. Since the comments reflect a completely insensitive and inhuman approach, it is compelled to ban the comments. However, the apex court expressed regret for using harsh words against the judge. In fact, under normal circumstances, the judges of the Supreme Court refrain from staying any decision at this stage. But the important thing that was said while banning the comments made in the referenced decision was that the ban means that they cannot be used further in any kind of legal process. In the opinion of legal experts, judges should exercise restraint. Because such comments reduce people's confidence in the judiciary. The Allahabad High Court's decision has underestimated a heinous crime like attempted rape, which is a mockery of justice. After cases like Satish vs State of Maharashtra, the apex court had condemned the underestimation of sexual crimes. By staying the verdict, the Supreme Court has advised the judges to be more sensitive and humane in such cases.

One prime minister's 19-month legacy is bigger than another's Emergency

Shastri's legacy is unfairly overshadowed by peace he made at Tashkent and a visit that also took his life. Among his contributions were Green Revolution and talent-hunting Dr Swaminathan.



Two tumultuous 19-month periods have defined our past over three generations, determined our present and will continue to dominate the future in their very contrasting ways. One is easy to guess. The 19 months of Emergency between 25 June, 1975 and 18 January, 1977. Serendipity, that this column is being written on 21 March, the day that marks the 48th anniversary of the official revocation of Emergency.

One set of 19 history-defining months out of the way, can you guess what would be the second? I can make it easier for you. Go back to the tenures of our prime ministers. Not Nehru, Indira, Vajpayee, Modi, V.P. Singh, Gowda, Gujral, Charan Singh. None of these. Since I have already given the riddle away, I will now suggest that we read the just-released biography of Lal Bahadur Shastri written by eminent former IAS officer-turned-scholar Sanjeev Chopra. I had the honour to be among those speaking at the release of 'The Great Conciliator: Lal Bahadur Shastri and the transformation of India' at the national capital's India International Centre this Tuesday. Between 9 June, 1964 after Jawaharlal Nehru's death and his own tragic passing at Tashkent on 11 January, 1966, Shastri also served for exactly 19 months. And why do we argue that these were as consequential for India's political evolution as the Emergency if in entirely contrasting ways? Think of a mere 19 months when India fought a full-fledged war (September, 1965), a localised skirmish with tanks (Kutch April-July 1965), dealt with crippling food shortages, a difficult political transformation and built more institutions than in any comparable period in our history. The high point of the 19 Shastri months was, of course, the 22-day war that he fought against great odds and won in principle, even if military historians often call it a stalemate. A stalemate against a much, much better enemy with initiative besides equipment in each dimension of warfare that was at least three notches superior is a victory.

Plus, only one side, Pakistan, had an objective in that war. They saw a great opportunity to conquer Kashmir and lost. It was the last time they had the relative strength militarily and diplomatically to take Kashmir. Shastri's resolve buried that dream forever. The legacy of Shastri is unfairly overshadowed by the peace he made at Tashkent and a visit that also took his life. His true contribution is the war he waged. Field Marshal Ayub Khan and his sidekick Zulfikar Ali Bhutto saw great vulnerabilities in the Indian armed forces reeling under the 1962 debacle, and now caught in frenetic transition.

They were emboldened by the 1963 Hazratbal crisis in Srinagar, misread the political transition from Nehru to Shastri as political instability and then, they checked out India's preparedness and morale with probing raids in the Rann of Kutch (RoK).

As Chopra tells you in his very well-documented account, the Pakistanis also checked out their American masters' response by using the Patton tanks in RoK. Under their larger agreement, they were not allowed to use them against India. But, because the Americans did nothing more than make some pious tut-tuts, they knew they could make the big move on Kashmir.

The result: just a couple of months later was Operation Gibraltar, which involved sending more than 10,000 armed infiltrators into Kashmir. It was named Gibraltar because that was the first foothold

the Islamic conquerors established in Europe. Each infiltrating group was also named after famed Islamic warriors: Tariq, Qasim, Khaled, Salahuddin and, for sure, Ghaznavi. Once these groups pulverised the Indian forces in the Valley, the decisive blow would be Operation Grand Slam, as Ayub named the planned massive tank thrust to take Akhnoor in Jammu, or going for the jugular, as he called it.

He is also recorded as having boasted that 'it is well known that the Hindu morale cannot survive more than one or two hard blows'. In this case, there was also a misreading of the resolve of the leader on the other side. Generals, especially Pakistanis, always have a low opinion of civilians. In this case, given how the thought processes of Ayub and his cohort worked, Shastri's diminutive stature and soft-spoken style strengthened this delusion. Except that inside that frail 5ft 2in frame resided an incredibly strong-willed Indian patriot.

The increasingly successful fightback against the infiltrators was still on when Shastri convened his Cabinet and decided on 3 September, with Pakistani tanks (Op Grand Slam) threatening Akhnoor, the broad outlines of his response were drawn. Significantly it included destroying Pakistan's offensive power built only capturing the minimum territory necessary and returning it after successful completion of the war.

There's much unanimity in India on the outcome of the war. In India, the sore point will also be the return of Haji Pir Pass in the Uri sector.

The UN ceasefire resolution, however, had demanded that both sides return to the Ceasefire Line as it existed on 5 August. Which means the Pakistanis had to vacate Chumb, too. While Pakistan lost its last chance to grab Kashmir, the tactical and territorial picture wasn't as one-sided as believed in Indian folklore. That's what caused the Haji Pir compromise and, probably, Shastri his life at such a young age.

From whispers in 1966 to WhatsApp in present times, Shastri's death has been one of those eternal mysteries and the subject of countless conspiracy theories. The book gives us clarity on two things.

One, that Shastri had already had two heart attacks, in 1959 and then on 5 June, 1964, days before taking over as prime minister. This was the era before statins, stents, bypass surgeries. A third heart attack would be that much tougher to survive.

And the second, that on the day he signed the Tashkent agreement, Shastri was initially cheerful. But as he heard of reactions back home, the 'surrender of Haji Pir' having become the refrain in the press, and finally when he spoke with his daughter and wife, both of whom seemed unhappy, his spirit dropped. Within hours he was gone.

It is ironic and also quite tragic and unfair that while talking about Shastri's legacy, we get bogged down with that war and peace. Or, in the overwhelming 'Jai Jawan' story. His even more long-lasting contribution was on the 'Jai Kisan' front. He initiated the Green Revolution, found C. Subramaniam as his food minister, talent-hunted scientist Dr M.S. Swaminathan and founded India's first central agriculture universities.

More importantly, he reached out to the Americans for collaboration. One of the lesser appreciated sides to Shastri's politics is that he wasn't a man of the Nehruvian Centre-Left. You could call him a man of the Centre, as Chopra does. I would say he was more a leader of the Centre, but leaning a bit to the Right. For evidence, read about his dismay at Nehru blocking Purshottam Das Tandon's election as Congress chief, Shastri's upbringing at Servants of the People Society and learnings from Lala Lajpat Rai. And then, the backing by decidedly Right-wing and pro-West Swatantra Party over his no-confidence motion. Also, check out his speech where he locked horns with his Communist antagonist Hiren Mukherjee's accusation that he was deviating from Nehruvianism. In essence, he said, deviation is what you complain about in the communist system. In democracy, there is change.

There is one enduring Americanism I repeat often: the only legacy you leave behind is people. In case of Shastri, I will rephrase that. An even better legacy for a great public figure to leave behind is the institutions they built.

Farmers' deputation meets Sat Sharma over Tractor Tax issue



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

A deputation of farmers from Jammu border district, led by Rakesh Pant, General Secretary of BJP Kisaan Morcha, called on BJP President Sat Sharma CA to submit a memorandum seeking his help in exemption from the tax levied on tractors used for agricultural purposes.

The deputation expressed concern over the imposition of a 9 percent tax on Indian-made tractors used for

agricultural activities within Jammu and Kashmir. According to the memorandum, the farmers pointed out that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been consistently promoting the use of India-made machinery to boost domestic manufacturing and support the 'Make in India' initiative. However, they argued that the current policy in Jammu and Kashmir contradicts this vision.

The farmers noted that the government has provided rebates on foreign-made tractors, while Indian-made tractors face heavy taxation, a

practice not observed in any other state or union territory across the country. This disparity, the deputation stated, places an unfair burden on local farmers who are striving to make a livelihood through agriculture.

Sat Sharma CA assured the members of the deputation to take up the issue with the UT government to reconsider its stance and provide tax exemptions for tractors used exclusively for agricultural purposes, aligning with the Prime Minister's vision of promoting indigenous machinery.

He assured the deputation that the matter would be actively pursued to seek a favorable resolution. He reiterated the party's commitment to the welfare of farmers and highlighted various schemes implemented by the central government aimed at improving the agricultural sector. Rakesh Pant said that the farmers are sure that their concerns will be addressed promptly, paving the way for a policy that supports their interests and promotes the use of Indian-made machinery.

BJP Spokesperson Balbir Ram Rattan, Media Incharge Dr. Pardeep Mahotra and other party leaders were present on the occasion.

Shakti Udgosh launches free coaching for IKPSI aspirants



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

In its ongoing mission to empower youth, especially women, Shakti Udgosh, under the leadership of founder Preeti Choudhary, is launching a free coaching program for aspiring candidates (both girls and boys) preparing for the post of IKPSI. The initiative is being organized with the support of Gandhi Bhawan.

The coaching batch is scheduled to commence in the first week of April, with a course duration of 45 days. The program will adopt a result-oriented approach, featuring personalized sessions, regular mock tests, and a special focus on reasoning and other essential subjects.

Participants who maintain full attendance throughout the course will be suitably rewarded for their dedication and discipline. Over the years, Shakti Udgosh has made commendable strides in women empowerment. The organization has successfully trained approximately 300 females, with 15 candidates having been selected in prestigious roles within the Defence, Police, and allied forces. Interested candidates can reach out and register through Shakti Udgosh's official social media handles. Registration is open now and completely free of cost.

This initiative reflects Shakti Udgosh's unwavering commitment to uplift and support the aspirations of young individuals in Bast and beyond.

Ashok Koul asks party cadre to prepare for upcoming elections

Koul, Sham address Mandal activists meeting at Nagrota



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

Ashok Koul, General Secretary (organization), J&K BJP, accompanied by District Prabhari Sham Lal Sharma, MLA & Vice-President, J&K BJP, Bharat Bhushan, DDC Chairperson, Assembly Incharge RS Pathania, MLA & Spokesperson, Nand Kishore Sharma, District President, Jammu North, Vinay Mahajan, Seh-Prabhari Jammu North District, Parduman Singh, senior leader, and Devyani Rana, Vice-President BJYM.

Mandal Presidents along with their teams from four Mandals under the Nagrota Assembly Constituency attended the meeting.

Ashok Koul, while addressing the Mandal activists, stressed upon them to brace themselves for the upcoming elections. He said that the BJP activists are like trained soldiers, who never rest and keep them-

selves pre-occupied with the tasks that are aimed to benefit the nation, society and the organization. He said that the BJP has secured the highest number of votes in the recently concluded Assembly elections in Jammu & Kashmir, which itself testifies the acceptance of the policies of BJP and public centric-governance under PM Narendra Modi.

"The people of Jammu & Kashmir have supported BJP and with every passing day, the prominent social and political figures from varying backgrounds are joining the party with an unwavering faith on its commitment for the development of Jammu & Kashmir like other parts of this great nation", said Ashok Koul.

Advising the party cadre to prepare themselves for the upcoming elections, Ashok Koul, made them aware about various activities related to coordination with the election office, necessary additions, alter-

ations, and deletions in the voter lists and the role of BLA1, BLA2, so as to ensure the effective voting process.

Ashok Koul also shared the details of forthcoming party programmes with the Mandal activists. He maintained that need to devote more time to conduct the party activities at the ground level especially the BJP's foundation Day on 6th April, and Samrasta Diwas on the birth anniversary of Bharat Ratna Dr. BR Ambedkar on 14th April involving the prominent figures from the society.

Sham Lal Sharma spoke on the various development measures by the Modi government that have benefited Jammu and Kashmir. He said that as the party is not in the government in Jammu & Kashmir, the efforts of BJP's leaders including the MLAs and the activists should increase manifolds to meet the aspirations of people.

Bharat Bhushan said that as the unprecedented development tasks are being undertaken by the Modi government in the region, the BJP cadre is supposed to further augment the efforts to benefit the masses. RS Pathania asked the Mandal activists to take the pro-people schemes to the needy population with the collaborative efforts to help them, which will help them earn the faith of masses.

Nand Kishore Sharma, while thanking the senior leadership for their guidance, assured them that the Mandal teams under the leadership of their presidents will leave no stone unturned to ensure that party's policies and ideology and Modi government's schemes reach the needy section of society.

Grand Navratri Celebrations held at Shri Lakshmi Narayan Mandir with devotional fervour



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

The festival of Navratri, i.e, Nine nights dedicated to the worship of Goddess Durga, is celebrated by Hindus across the world. During this auspicious period, devotees offer special prayers both in the morning and evening to pay obeisance to the Goddess.

Since its inception, the Management of Shri Lakshmi Narayan Mandir, Gandhi Nagar, Jammu, has been celebrating Navratras every year with great devotion and enthusiasm. This year, too, following Beeja Ropan on the first Navratra, the Trust organized a Ram Katha in Dogri, delivered by Pt. Satpal Raina Ji, followed by a Ladies' Satsang, where devotional Durga Bhajans were recited. A large number of Sanatan Dharma devotees participated in these events.

A special highlight this year was the Maha Aarti of Mata Vaishno Devi Ji, conducted in the style of the renowned Haridwar Maha Aarti. This attracted hundreds of devotees, including Trustees, special invitees, learned Pandits, and Pujaris.

Parshad was distributed among devotees during all the days of the celebrations. The entire temple complex was beautifully illuminated, and the arrangements made by the Management Trust received widespread appreciation. On Ashtami, MLA Vikram Randhawa along with other dignitaries, graced the occasion with their presence. As per tradition, a special Hawan Yagya was organized today, attended by a large number of devotees, and was followed by the Kanjak Puja ceremony.

Javed Rana lauds efforts of stakeholders in achieving target under 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU JAMMU:

Jammu and Kashmir has successfully met its ambitious goal of planting 150 lakh seedlings under 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign.

Lauding the achievement of Forest, Ecology and Environment, Javed Ahmed Rana credited it to the collective efforts of government agencies, village-level institutions, local people and other stakeholders.

"The aim of the campaign is to contain land degradation and promote restoration of degraded land for a sustainable future," he said adding

that the campaign aligns with the quest for sustainable development. He commended the efforts of Forest department in leading the campaign saying that tree plantation raises awareness about environmental sustainability and the importance of afforestation.

"Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" was launched across the country to encourage the people to plant a tree as a mark of love, respect and honour for their mothers and pledge to protect trees and earth.

The Forest Department led the campaign for planting 1,50,18,803 saplings in J&K, involving the stu-

dents, NGOs, security forces, government departments, citizens and nature lovers.

Under the initiative, the Forest department and its wings planted 91 lakh plants on forest and non-forest lands. Besides, it distributed 59 lakh plants among various stakeholders for planting at various locations throughout the Union Territory.

More than one lakh plants were planted by Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board and about two lakh plants were distributed on the day of Eid-ul-Fitr.

Javed Rana complimented various sections of the society for their contribution in achieving the target. He said that each stakeholder has made substantial contributions to this initiative, demonstrating a collective commitment towards sustainability, green cover enhancement and fostering public engagement.

"It was heartening to see how enthusiastically people embraced the campaign, reinforcing the importance of environmental stewardship for the well-being of future generations. We would not have been able to achieve the target without the active participation of the local people" he said.

During the campaign, the forest department sensitised the locals about the importance of tree plantation in combating the climate change and enhancing greenery.

ADC Nowshera reviews status of public services delivery, arrangements for upcoming festivals



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU NOWSHERA:

Additional Deputy Commissioner Nowshera Pritam Lal Thapa today chaired a meeting with officers of line departments in his office chamber to review the status of public services delivery in the sub-division.

During the interaction, the ADC emphasized the importance of dedicated and responsive governance. He urged officers to discharge their duties with commitment and adopt a proactive approach in addressing public grievances. He stressed that timely delivery of services must be prioritized so that the general public does not face any inconvenience.

Later in the day, the ADC visited the revered Mangla Devi Temple to take stock of the preparations underway for Durga Ashtami and Ramnavmi festivals. Accompanied by officers and members of the temple management committee, he conducted a detailed inspection of arrangements related to sanitation, security, water and power supply, fire safety, medical facilities, traffic and crowd management, and other essential services. He also reviewed the arrangements made at Mangla Mata Temple and issued necessary directions for further improvement.

The ADC further directed the concerned officers to conduct market checking and inspection drives to curb overpricing and ensure the availability of quality essential commodities during the festive period.

Executive Engineer Jal Shakti, Tehsildar, BDO, BMO, EO MC, TSO, and other sectoral officers attended the meeting and accompanied the ADC during the visit.

Aryans Law student present sketches to Law Minister Meghwal & Justice Palli



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU JAMMU:

The 4th Memorial Lecture in memory of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Madan Mohan Punchhi, 28th Chief Justice of India, at Panjab University, Chandigarh. Chief Guest of this event was Minister of Law Sh. Arjun Ram Meghwal while Guest of Honour was Mr. Justice Arun Palli, Judge, Punjab & Haryana High Court. The Law students of Aryans College of Law, Rajpura, Near Chandigarh participated in this session and presented handmade sketches to dignitaries.

Over 100 Aryans BA-LLB & LLB students participated in this event. The event was organized by Sanjay Tandon & Satyam Tandon, Compete Foundation on "Tackling the challenges created by artificial intelligence through the existing legal framework." Meghwal traced the evolution of industries in different eras, from industry 1.0 to industry 4.0 and spoke about the emergence of cloud computing, robotics, Internet of Things (IoT) and 3D printing. Meghwal further provided examples of The French Revolution, BR Ambedkar and Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar in guiding a constitutional integration of AI into society. Justice Arun Palli highlighted the existing legal tools available to tackle the challenges posed by AI, as well as the potential gaps that need to be addressed. He underscored the importance of the legal system in accommodating the rapid growth of AI technologies while ensuring fairness.

District Level Workshop on AWAAS PLUS 2.0 held at Panchayat Bhawan



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU JAMMU:

A one day District Level Workshop cum Awareness Programme on AWAAS PLUS 2.0 -PMAY (G) was today organized here at Panchayat Bhawan.

In his inaugural address,

Director Rural Development Department Mohammad Mumtaz Ali exhorted the departmental functionaries to complete the registration process by April 30, 2025- the timeline set by the government. He lauded the efforts put in by the Officers and Officials of

Rural Development Department of District Jammu for registering 13,426 beneficiaries as on date. Earlier, Assistant Commissioner Development Dr. Vikas Sharma provided an overview of PMAY-G and the achievements with respect to

District Jammu. "Since the Government has extended the deadline by one month from 31st of March 2025 to 30th of April 2025 the Block Development Officers and registered surveyors have been instructed to ensure that no eligible beneficiary was left unregistered" he added.

The Block Development Officers of R.S. Pura, Maira Mandrian and Satwari presented the PPTs on success stories, best practices and cumulative targets achieved in District Jammu under PMAY -G from the year 2016 till date.

Desilting of Bhagwati Nagar Escape Channel starting in next 3 days: I&FC department

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU JAMMU:

The Irrigation and Flood Control Department today clarified that the desilting of Escape Channel of the Ranbir canal originating at Bhagwati Nagar is being started in the next 2 to 3 days.

Responding to a News about appearing a section of press reporting on poor sanitation, the Department clarified "The Escape Channel besides playing a vital role in protection of MRC structure during flood season also feeds Bhadrore Supply channel, Bhadrore khul and

Seora khul to provide irrigation to 600 Ha of CCA falling in 2 villages viz. Bhadrore and Seora which is minor as compared with the total CCA of 38000 Ha of the entire Ranbir canal.

As per the past practice, the desilting work of the Escape channel and these khuls is done in the month of April every year as the farmers along these khuls do not allow passing the vehicles through their fields in view of the standing wheat crops and water is supplied to them ending April as per their demand.

Moreover, the initial 300m stretch of the escape channel, which came

into the alignment of the piers of the flyover near Bhagwati Nagar under construction by the NHIDCL, has not been reconstructed by them till date as per the agreement despite repeated requests.

NHIDCL will make some temporary arrangements by construction of an earthen channel, which shall be completed within a day or two as assured by them.

Accordingly, the work of desilting of the Escape channel between RD 320 m to 1350 m and the associated khuls will be taken up within 2-3days and shall be completed next week."

Ayush Shopian organises Anti Drug Awareness camp at Chitragam

MLA Zainapora emphasises on youth engagement & parental guidance



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
SHOPIAN:

In order to aware the adolescent students about the dangers of Drug Abuse, the Department of Ayush Shopian today organised an awareness camp on Drug Addiction with the theme, 'Be High on Dreams, Not on Drugs, Choose Life, Not Drugs' at Govt. High School, Chitragam.

The Camp was inaugurated by Member of Legislative Assembly (MLA) Zainapora, Showkat Hussain Ganie and was attended by SDM, Zainapora, Bilal Ahmad, CMO, Dr.Arshad, DIO, Showkat Ganie, BMO Zainapora and other officials of Ayush, Health and locals. MLA Zainapora, emphasised the role of parents, terming it essential to tackle the menace along with the engagement of youth in positive and productive activities. He sought cooperation of all to fight the war against the Drug Addiction, and appealed to teachers and parents to keep vigil on their students and wards. On the occasion, speakers of Ayush, Health, Education and student speakers highlighted the role of stakeholders especially parents, educational institutions along with the government departments in tackling the menace of drug abuse. District Nodal Officer Ayush, Dr. Javid vied for promoting Ayush and its health and wellness benefits through physical exercises, yogic practice and sports activities.

DC Shopian reviews operation of medical establishments & shops



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
SHOPIAN:

To ensure strict enforcement of norms and guidelines from all categories of medical establishments, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Shishir Gupta today chaired a meeting of Health, Revenue and Drug Control officers. DC reviewed the tehsil wise operations of medical shops, clinics and clinical laboratories and their compliance to the norms and guidelines, deliberated upon the deficiencies and future course of action was decided. Registration of establishments, installation of CCTVs, operation of Computerised Billing System and stock maintenance was stressed upon to ensure compliance across the district.

DC called for the cent percent Computerised Billing System and operation of CCTVs along with strict crackdown on medical shops operating in violations of norms. He instructed for heightened inspections of medical shops and initiating strict action including suspensions, closures of medical establishments for violations.

The meeting was attended by ADDC, Dr.Nasir Ahmad Lone; ADC, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz; CMO, Tehsildars, DIO, Asst. Drug Controller, DNO Ayush and Drug Inspectors.

LA Speaker inaugurates Royal Health, Wellness Centre at Srinagar

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
SRINAGAR:

Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, Abdul Rahim Rather, inaugurated the Royal Health and Wellness Centre at Poloview here today.

Speaking after the inauguration ceremony, the Speaker emphasized on the importance of accessible and innovative healthcare solutions. He lauded the initiative for bringing advanced wellness practices to the region. He expressed hope that the Centre would serve as a significant step towards holistic health improvement for the community.

On the occasion, Owner of the Royal Health and Wellness Centre, Srinagar, Dr. Hamid Sofi, briefed the Speaker about the facilities being provided at the Centre. Pertinently, the newly launched facility aims to provide advanced healthcare and wellness services to the patients, enhancing holistic well-being in the region. The Centre has been equipped to offer modern medical



services, diagnostics and specialized wellness programs, integrating traditional therapeutic techniques with contemporary healthcare solutions to cater to the diverse health needs of the community. One of the key highlights of the Centre is its range of therapeutic services, including cup-

ping therapy and aromatherapy.

The launch of the Royal Health and Wellness Centre marks a milestone in strengthening healthcare infrastructure in Srinagar, offering the residents a dedicated space for preventive and therapeutic wellness services.

DC reviews implementation of PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana in Poonch District

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
POONCH:

Deputy Commissioner Vikas Kundal today chaired a meeting to evaluate the implementation of the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana in the district. The meeting aimed to streamline the installation of solar rooftop systems and enhance public awareness regarding the scheme's benefits.

At the outset, the Executive Engineer JPDCL delivered an in-depth PowerPoint presentation detailing the objectives and advantages of the scheme.

It was reported that out of 570 applications received, 61 solar units have already been installed, with 48 cases approved for loan schemes



by banks. The Deputy Commissioner directed the Executive Engineer to ensure the installation of 100th solar units by April

12, 2025.

He urged vendors to commence the installation of Solar Rooftop Systems (SRTs) for sanctioned

applicants methodically.

The DC emphasized the need for public awareness and participation. He instructed the Executive Engineer to actively involve stakeholders and enlighten them about the numerous benefits and incentives associated with the solar energy scheme.

This initiative represents a strategic effort to empower consumers and facilitate their access to the government's solar energy program, reinforcing the commitment of the administration to sustainable energy solutions.

The Deputy Commissioner underscored the pivotal role of collaborative efforts in achieving maximum outreach and ensuring the successful execution of the scheme across Poonch district.

Anti Drug Campaign: Reasi Admin hosts orientation workshop for Resource Persons

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
REASI:

A one-day orientation programme to train resource persons for conducting Information, Education and Communication Campaign against drug abuse was organized today by the District Administration Reasi here under the aegis of Deputy Commissioner Nidhi Malik.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Rakesh Kumar chaired the workshop organised to impart training to Resource persons for Nashta Mukh Jammu & Kashmir Abhiyan.

The IEC campaign forms part of the National Action Plan for Drug Demand Reduction initiated under



the Nasha Mukh Bharat Abhiyan. District Social Welfare Officer Sachin Sharma; District Information Officer Ujwal Sambyal and officials from other stakeholder departments attended the orientation program.

At the outset, the District Social Welfare Officer delivered a detailed

PowerPoint presentation, highlighting the importance of equipping resource persons with proper training and knowledge for effective implementation. A detailed deliberation was held on strengthening efforts to curb drug abuse and work collectively towards making Reasi a drug free district.

LMD penalises E-Commerce Platform for Labelling Violations in Jammu

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

On the directive of Controller Legal Metrology J&K Anuradha Gupta, the field staff of Legal Metrology, Consumer Protection Unit, Jammu imposed a penalty of ₹1.50 lakh on a prominent e-commerce platform operating in the region.

The step is a significant move to uphold consumer rights and ensure compliance with packaging regulations.

The concerned e-commerce platform has recently expanded its services to Jammu by opening stores, including one in Jammu, primarily offering instant delivery of a wide range of products such as groceries, fresh fruits, vegetables, meat, stationery, bakery items, personal care, baby care, pet care products, snacks, and flowers.

The action was initiated following an inspection by the area Inspector, under the supervision of Assistant

Controller Consumer Protection Jammu. During the inspection approximately 1200 packages were seized for failing to meet mandatory labelling requirements as stipulated under the Legal Metrology Act, 2009 and the Legal Metrology (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 2011.

The main violation includes non-declaration of exact net weight of pre-packaged fruits and vegetables for sale through the e-commerce platform.

Upon issuance of a show cause notice, the company acknowledged the offence and promptly submitted application for compounding of the offences which led to imposing a penalty and settling of case at department level on assurance of immediate corrective measures to align with the prescribed labelling norms.

Following the department's intervention, the e-commerce platform has removed the non-compliant products from its physical store

shelves for re-labelling and has unlisted the violating items from its online platform to prevent further consumer inconvenience.

A spokesperson from Controller Legal Metrology Department, J&K emphasized the department's unwavering commitment to protecting consumer rights and ensuring fair trade practices. This action is part of an ongoing initiative directed by the Controller Legal Metrology Department J&K to regulate e-commerce platforms, especially in light of evolving trade dynamics and technological advancements which has necessitated enhanced enforcement strategies.

Consumers are encouraged to remain vigilant and report any discrepancy related to product labelling or other unfair trade practices pertaining to Legal Metrology. The Legal Metrology Department assures the public of its dedication to fostering a transparent and consumer-friendly marketplace.

Bandipora admin holds training prog for coordinators for IEC campaign against drug abuse



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
BANDIPORA:

The District Administration Bandipora on Friday organized a training programme for coordinators designated for the IEC Campaign against drug abuse.

The programme, presided over by Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Bandipora, Zaffar Husson Shawl, was aimed at equipping coordinators with the necessary knowledge and tools to effectively implement the campaign at the grassroots level.

Speaking on the occasion, ADC emphasized the significance of the IEC campaign in curbing drug menace and its adverse effects on society. He urged all stakeholders to work with dedication and enthusiasm to ensure the campaign's success in a mission mode. ADC Zaffar Husson Shawl called for collective efforts to safeguard the youth and the community from the ill effects of drugs and stressed the importance of early intervention and prevention strategies to ensure a drug-free society.

He also stressed the importance of using a strategic communication approach to reach vulnerable sections of society.

District Information Officer (DIO), Aadil Manzoor Wani, who is also District Level Coordinator for the IEC Campaign, elaborated on the vital role of coordinators in executing awareness initiatives.

He highlighted the activities planned under the campaign, stressing the importance of community participation and outreach in spreading awareness.

He urged coordinators to actively involve youth at panchayat level to amplify the message against drug abuse. On the occasion, resource person from the National Informatics Centre (NIC) Sheikh Aubaid ur Rehman briefed the participants on the use of an Android application specifically designed for uploading and monitoring IEC campaign activities, ensuring seamless reporting and transparency.

Indian Army Conducts Medical Patrol for Gujar and Bakarwal Communities in Rajouri

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
RAJOURI:

In keeping with its ethos of service, professionalism, and compassion, the Indian Army organized a medical patrol in the remote villages of Gulair, Chapta, and Sarsoti in Rajouri district. The initiative was aimed at extending medical assistance to the underserved Gujar and Bakarwal communities residing in these far-flung areas.

The medical patrol provided much-needed healthcare services to 87 villagers, including 39 men, 29 women, and 19 children from Gulair and nearby areas. Residents availed free medical consultations, treatment, and medicines, all facilitated by a dedicated team of Indian Army doctors and medical representatives.

The initiative is part of the Indian Army's continuous efforts to reach out to the people living in remote and difficult terrains, where access to basic healthcare remains a significant challenge. These patrols are conducted with the objective of addressing immediate medical needs while also creating awareness about hygiene, disease prevention, and general health.

During the patrol, patients were examined for a variety of common ailments, including seasonal infections, joint pain, skin diseases, and nutritional deficiencies.

Girls' Sports competitions held in Doda to promote Beti Bachao Beti Padhao campaign



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
DODA:

In line with the directives of the District Development Commissioner, Department of Social Welfare, in collaboration with the Department of

Youth Services and Sports organized girls' sports competitions under the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao initiative.

The event, held in two zones—Bhaderwah and Bhallessa—aimed to promote the empowerment of girls through sports and encourage their

active participation in physical activities.

A total of 90 girls from different institutions and panchayats of twin zones participated in the competitions. Zone Bhaderwah hosted Kabaddi, while Zone Bhallessa organized a Volleyball competition, allowing young athletes to showcase their skills, teamwork, and sportsmanship.

The initiative emphasized the importance of providing equal opportunities to girls in both education and sports, fostering confidence and leadership qualities among them.

The event not only celebrated the sporting talent of young girls but also served as a platform to raise awareness about gender equality and the importance of empowering the girl child.

Encouraging participation in sports plays a crucial role in breaking stereotypes and inspiring young girls to pursue their dreams fearlessly.

DM Baramulla chairs 17th District Level NCORD, NMBA meeting

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
BARAMULLA:

District Magistrate Baramulla, Minga Sherpa today chaired the 17th District Level NCORD/NMBA meeting reviewing ongoing efforts to combat drug abuse and strengthen enforcement, awareness, and rehabilitation initiatives.

During the meeting, the DM issued several key directions to concerned officers. He emphasized the need to conduct awareness programs, training sessions for resource persons, and seminars to educate communities about the dangers of sub-



stance abuse. These initiatives will help enhance grassroots-level intervention and ensure effective implementation of anti-drug measures.

To engage youth in positive activities, the DM directed the organization

of inter-youth club tournaments and district-level sports events to discourage drug abuse through sports and recreation. Additionally, he called for plantation drives at the village level, promoting environmental consciousness

alongside anti-drug awareness.

A significant focus was placed on identifying and monitoring 20 hotspots in Baramulla and 6 in Sopore, where targeted interventions will be implemented to curb drug-related activities.

Furthermore, rehabilitation programs will be strengthened to support affected individuals and help them reintegrate into society.

The DM urged all stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies, civil society, and educational institutions, to work collectively in tackling drug abuse.

GCOE Jammu organises awareness rally themed "Stay away from drugs"

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

NCORD Committee of Government College of Education, in collaboration with Social Reform Charitable Trust on Thursday organised a Rally-cum awareness campaign themed "Stay away from drugs." The College Principal Dr.(Prof.) Jyoti Parihar led the event in the presence of esteemed speaker S.K Jain, State Yoga Commissioner and his team.

The event was initiated with a warm and engaging welcome speech by Convener NCORD Committee, Prof. Sunanda Rani.

In his address, the State Yoga Commissioner captivated the audience with a heartfelt poem highlighting the dangers of drug addiction and emphasizing the importance of saying no to drugs. His other team members also shed light on this sensitive issue.



To enhance the impact of the event, the participants solemnly pledged to "Say No To Drugs". To add depth to the event, a rally was organised and flagged off by Prof. Sunanda Rani in presence of Dr. Shalini Sharma, Prof. Roopa Kumari, Dr.Ambica Kumari along with the students to raise awareness about drug abuse.

A formal vote of thanks was

extended by Dr. Ambica Kumari.

The event concluded with the distribution of refreshment to the students, generously sponsored by Dabur India Limited. The event was a great success witnessing active participation from both students and faculty members, including Prof. Satish Kumar Sharma, Dr. Rajinder Kour, Dr. Sushma Bala and Prof. Sarita Dogra.

ADDC Shopian kick-starts sale of Hi-Tech vegetable seedlings



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
SHOPIAN:

Additional District Development Commissioner, Shopian, Dr. Nasir Ahmed Lone in presence of Chief Agriculture Officer, Shopian, Farooq Ahmed and other officials of the

Agriculture department kick-started the sale of Hi-Tech vegetable seedlings at Shopian, today.

The sale of seedlings including Cauliflower, Cabbage, broccoli and other vegetables was held at Green House, Mini Secretariat, organised by the Department of Agriculture

and Farmers Welfare, Shopian.

The sale witnessed a overwhelming response of vegetable growers from Shopian and adjacent areas.

Interacting with the growers, ADDC said that the department is committed to promote the Kitchen Garden endeavour and aims at providing quality vegetable seedlings to the growers for better economic turnover.

He impressed upon the department to promote kitchen gardening in such a way that growers get more and more benefits.

On the occasion, it was emphasised that vegetable cultivation has a good potential of employment generation and the unemployed youth of the district with the help of modern technology and suitable agro-climatic conditions for vegetable cultivation in the Valley can take it to new heights.

Drug de-addiction awareness programs held in Shopian schools

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
SHOPIAN:

A Mega drug de-addiction awareness programme on thursday was organised by School Education Department District Shopian at Govt Boys Higher Secondary School Shopian besides various other schools of the District.

On the occasion, Chief Education Officer Shopian Bashir Ahmad Malla, Principal BHSS Shopian other officers and officials of Department, and a large number of students participated in the important awareness programme.

The speakers emphasized on the ill effects of drug abuse and highlighted the need of taking immediate preventive and



remedial measures for combating and eradicating the menace of drug addiction and other social evils in the district.

The organisers said that the main aim of the programme was to spread awareness amongst the student community to take necessary steps for curbing the rising drug menace.

CEO Shopian, who was the chief guest on the occasion, advised the students not to indulge in drug abuse and other social evils and instead be a role model in the field of education, sports and other activities.

Highlighting the harmful effects of drugs, he said that it starts merely as an

amusement but ends up becoming addiction. The young generation is the most-affected section of drug addiction that needs to be eradicated completely from the society, he said seeking cooperation of all stakeholders.

CEO further said that the Shopian administration would lend a helping hand to anyone who was feeling stressed and ensure that youth instead engage in academic, co-curricular and sports activities.

Principal BHSS Shopian, Mohd Ashraf Allaie and other speakers also spoke on the occasion and appealed to the students to stay away from the tobacco and other harmful drugs and live a healthy and peaceful life.

Ego Is greatest barrier between Soul and God: Madhuparamhans Ji Maharaj

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

Today, the Sadguru of Sahib Bandagi, Shri Madhuparamhans Ji Maharaj, while delighting the congregation with the nectar of his parvachan in Akhnoor, said that it is easy to sacrifice a son, a woman etc. but it is difficult to sacrifice ego.

If you study the words of Goswami Ji, then Sahib will emerge from within. What you think that I am, is an illusion. This is a deception, this is a pretense. If there is any obstacle between you and God, then it is I. This is called Aapa or Hasti. That is why Sahib is saying that erase your existence if you want to move forward in the path of God.

If you look at wheat, look at gram, you will see a germination. Like, strong people are recruited in the army. No one makes them strong by feeding them. The British were very clever. They used to first select and then take out. They look for good grains of high breed, then chemicalize them. Then they do not get infested with worms. In this way the Guru makes you such that Maya cannot take hold. Your I is the barrier between you and God. The soul was neither born nor will it die. Then I eat, I sleep, who is this? The explanation of the soul is the same in all religions. The soul is beyond hunger and thirst. Then who is eating? The soul does not remain awake or sleep. Then who is sleeping? The soul never falls ill. Then who is falling ill? Everyone is doing whatever the mind wants. Sahib is saying very clearly that everyone is a devotee of the mind. The whole world is doing I. The mind has four forms. Desiring is done by the mind. Intellect is also a form of the mind. Chitta is also a form of the mind. Think about what you are remembering, whatever you remember that this is my so-and-so, here is my house. All this is the mind. Ego is the fourth form of the mind. All the work that you are doing is being done by I. The commander of I is the mind. You see, no one is going after this. Everyone is saying that fulfill our desires. A Maai came for the first time, she told me to fulfill her wishes. I stopped her and asked her to say it again, what she said. She repeated it. I said you have come to the wrong place. Wishes are not fulfilled here, they are crushed.

Some people say that hope is life. These hopes do not end. Sahib is saying that if desire ends then understand that worries are gone. The emperor is the one who has no desire. Sahib's words are not rhyming.

Div Com Kashmir celebrates Navratri with Kashmiri Pandit employees at Odina Sumbal

Extends warm greetings to the community



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
BANDIPORA:

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, Sunday joined the Kashmiri Pandit employees and their families in celebrating Navratri at the Kashmiri Pandit (KP) Colony Odina, Sumbal.

The celebration was marked by spiritual devotion and cultural events. On the occasion, bhajans and prayers were held at the temple premises of camp which was followed by the distribution of prasad and interaction with the community members.

While extending warm Navratri greetings, the Divisional Commissioner assured the community of the administration's commitment in improving the living conditions and infrastructure at accommodations provided to Kashmiri pandits.

He was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, besides senior officers from the district administration and police. Meanwhile, migrant employees expressed their gratitude to the Divisional Commissioner for the visit and participation in the celebrations.

Sakeena Itoo conducts extensive tour of Shangus-Anantnag East Constituency

Inspects SDH Shangus, PHC Nowgam, reviews healthcare facilities



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU ANANTNAG:

Minister for Health and Medical Education, Social Welfare and Education, Sakeena Itoo, today conducted an extensive tour of Shangus-Anantnag East Constituency to assess the public healthcare facilities and educational infrastructure in the area.

MLA Shangus-Anantnag-East, Reyaz Ahmad Khan; MLA Anantnag-West, Abdul Majeed Bhat (Larmi); Deputy Commissioner Anantnag, Syed Fakhrudin Hamid; Director Health Services Kashmir, Director School Education Kashmir, Director Social Welfare Kashmir besides other district officers also accompanied the

Minister during the visit.

While inspecting the Sub-District Hospital (SDH) Shangus, Sakeena Itoo took stock of medical services, availability of essential supplies and overall patient care at the facility. She engaged with the hospital staff and enquired about the overall healthcare delivery at the hospital. She assured them that necessary interventions would be made for infrastructural and other advanced medical care services at the facility to provide world-class healthcare facilities to the public. The Minister also interacted with the patients and had on-spot feedback from them about the services being provided at the hospital. Later, the Minister visited the Primary Health Centre (PHC)

Nowgam, assessing its operational efficiency, availability of medicines as well as other facilities.

Meanwhile, Sakeena Itoo also inspected the Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS), Shangus, and took stock of its functioning.

She inspected the classrooms, laboratories and other facilities at the institution. She also interacted with the staff and the students.

Interacting with the Principal and other staff, Sakeena Itoo stressed on the importance of ensuring a conducive learning environment in line with the NEP-2020. She assured them all possible support from the government for necessary infrastructure upgrades at the institution.

Sakeena Itoo also engaged with large number of locals at Shangus, assessing their issues and concerns.

Addressing the large gathering, Sakeena Itoo reiterated that the government is strengthening grassroots governance and ensuring that essential services reach every household and section of the society. "Healthcare and education are among the top priorities of Omar led government. We are committed towards strengthening these sectors for a brighter future of Jammu and Kashmir", she stated.

She assured the people of Shangus that their concerns regarding healthcare and public welfare will be addressed on priority.

MLA Shangus-Anantnag-East, Reyaz Ahmad Khan also addressed the gathering.

DHSJ inspects functioning of SDH Bhaderwah



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU BHADERWAH:

Director Health Services Jammu (DHSJ), Dr. Abdul Hamid Zargar today inspected patient care services at Sub-District Hospital (SDH) Bhaderwah.

The Director was accompanied by Chief Medical Officer Dr. Om Kumar and Block Medical Officer Dr. Mohammad Ashraf Kuchay.

Dr. Zargar conducted a thorough inspection of different sections of the hospital, interacting with the medical and paramedical staff.

The members of local NGOs and civil society members also met Dr Zargar and congratulated him for his new assignment as DHS Jammu. They also projected several demands for the betterment of healthcare services in the region.

They sought his intervention in strengthening the Medicare facilities, staff augmentation, and infrastructure development in SDH Bhaderwah and other peripheral health institutions.

Responding to the projected demands, Dr. Zargar assured the public that all possible measures will be taken to enhance healthcare services in the region.

He reiterated his commitment to strengthening infrastructure, ensuring the availability of medical personnel, and improving patient care services in SDH Bhaderwah and surrounding health centers.

Later, the DHS took stock of the arrangements at the ongoing screening camp being conducted in the hospital ahead of the mega surgical camp being organized by Rotary International India from 16th April 2025 onwards.

CMO along with BMO and hospital staff extended their warm regards to Dr. Zargar and provided a detailed briefing on the functioning and requirements of SDH Bhaderwah. Dr. Abdul Hamid Zargar expressed gratitude for the warm welcome and reaffirmed his commitment to strengthening healthcare facilities across the region.

DIPR artists promote anti-drug campaign among GDC Sidhra Students

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU JAMMU:

A Nukkad Natak cum Cultural Awareness Programme on "Nasha Mukht Bharat" (Say No to Drugs) campaign was organised by the Cultural Unit, Department of Information & Public Relations here at Government Degree College Sidhra. The initiative aimed to spread awareness about the detrimental effects of drug abuse and encourage a drug-free society.

Artists of the Cultural Unit presented theme-based songs and Nukkad Natak depicting real-life consequences of substance abuse and the importance of rehabilitation and awareness. The performers skillfully highlighted how drug addiction impacts individuals, families and society at large.

Speaking on the occasion, the College Principal Dr G.S. Rakwal



shared his views and also made the students and the audience aware of the topic.

He appreciated the Department of Information and Public Relations for organising such a meaningful event to raise awareness among the future of the nation.

Among others, officials of different departments, staff members and students witnessed the programme.

The programme was conducted under the directions of Joint Director Information Jammu Atul Gupta and supervision of Cultural Office Mukesh Kumar Sharma.

Arushi Sharma Excels Showcasing the Impact of Vikalp at SMVDU

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU JAMMU:

The students at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University initiated the Vikalp program in January 2009, with a small team of thoughtful and motivated students, whose main aim was to bring about an overall social change in the society. Today, the program has reached a point where more and more people have chosen to become a part of this program. The program has become successful beyond everyone expectations and is best illustrated by the students as 'an alternative, a step taken by the SMVDU family to provide education to the underprivileged children which has played the role of a candle in their dark lives'. Arushi Sharma, an active participant in Vikalp, at SMVDU has achieved an exceptional grade in her recent examinations, exemplifying her dedication and academic perseverance. Her remarkable success highlights the impact of Vikalp, a student-driven initiative committed to fostering academic excellence and personal growth. Through her consistent efforts and the support of Vikalp's educational programs, Arushi has demonstrated outstanding commitment to learning. Congratulating her on this achievement, Hon'ble Vice Chancellor, Prof. (Dr.) Pragati Kumar, also praised Team Vikalp for their commendable efforts in educating and uplifting underprivileged students.



DC Pulwama reviews NEET (UG) Examination arrangements

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU PULWAMA:

Deputy Commissioner Pulwama, Dr Basharat Qayoom chaired a preliminary meeting today regarding NEET (UG) Examination arrangements at the Administrative Complex Pulwama. The meeting focused on assessing logistical support, security arrangements and infrastructure readiness to ensure the seamless

and fair conduct of the examination across designated centres in the district.

During the session, the representatives from designated NEET centres briefed the chair on their preparations, including infrastructural and logistical arrangements, surveillance measures and security protocols.

The Deputy Commissioner directed strict adherence to all prescribed

protocols and guidelines to ensure transparency and fairness in the examination process.

The Police Department provided an overview of security arrangements, informing that special Police Nodal Officers will be designated for each centre to oversee security measures. In addition, proper escort services will be deployed to ensure the safe and secure transportation of examination materials.

MD JJM directs officials to upload data of works on PM Gati Shakti portal

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
SRINAGAR:

Mission Director, Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), J&K Khurshid Ahmad Shah urged the Jal Shakti (PHE) Divisions of J&K to speed up the process of mapping the pipelines laid under JJM and uploading the same on PM Gati Shakti portal.

He gave these instructions today while chairing a preparatory meeting which was attended by Chief Engineers, Jal Shakti (PHE) Departments Jammu/Kashmir, Superintending Engineers (Hydraulic) Circles J&K and Executive Engineers of Civil as well as Mechanical divisions of the UT of J&K.

The meeting was held in virtual mode and all the officers attended the meeting from their respective



stations.

On the occasion, he enquired about the progress achieved in uploading the pipeline and Water Testing Infrastructure created under JJM on PM Gati Shakti portal. He urged the executive engineers to ensure that the targets set in this

regard are achieved well in time.

The chair also directed the officers to rectify the errors related to data (Dump data) uploaded on IMIS portal of Jal Jeevan Mission so that a clear picture of work done is uploaded and put in the public domain.

DC Kupwara chairs NCORD meeting to review measures for curbing drug menace



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
KUPWARA:

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan today chaired the meeting of the District Level Committee of Narco Coordination (NCORD) to review the measures put in place for curbing drug abuse in the district. At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner took a detailed appraisal from concerned

officers regarding the present scenario of drug related occurrences, various issues related to menace of drug addiction, its control and rehabilitation and areas of concern.

Deputy Commissioner meticulously reviewed the implementation of the measures taken and progress achieved to eliminate drug abuse and its peddling. She took feedback from the members of the Committee who presented the latest report related to

action taken against drug-addiction and drug trafficking in the District.

DC also emphasized the Officers including Enforcement agencies for identification and close vigil of entry points, hot spots of drugs, public places and abandoned buildings.

She also laid thrust on further intensifying IEC campaigns at Schools and Colleges levels to sensitize students and common masses about ill-effects of drugs. She sought close coordination between Health, Police, Education and other line departments for consolidated efforts towards eradication of drug menace.

DC meticulously reviewed the functioning of Drug De-addiction Centre Kupwara and Addiction Treatment Facility Centre (ATFC) Handwara and stressed for upscaling of the therapeutic management and proper counseling of the drug addicts which can help the addicts to come out of the menace.

MLA Sonawari, DC Bandipora visit Semi Ring Road Project site Shadipora to address public concerns



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
BANDIPORA:

In a significant step towards addressing public grievances and expediting infrastructural development, Member of Legislative Assembly for Sonawari Constituency of Bandipora District Hilal Akbar Lone, along with Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Manzoor Ahmad Qadri, today visited under construction semi Ring Road project

site Shadipora sumbal.

The visit was aimed to assess the progress of the project, address concerns raised by local residents, and ensure timely completion of the project. During the visit, the MLA and Deputy Commissioner interacted with the locals to understand their grievances regarding land acquisition, compensation, and road connectivity.

The MLA emphasized the importance of the project in enhancing

transportation, reducing traffic congestion, and boosting economic activities in the area.

He assured the public that their concerns would be addressed in coordination with NHAI and other concerned departments.

Qadri, while reviewing the progress of the project, emphasized the adherence to the deadlines while maintaining quality standards. He highlighted the administration's commitment to resolve any pending issues in a transparent and time-bound manner. During the visit, engineers and officials of NHAI briefed regarding completion timeline, challenges faced, and measures required to ensure smooth execution of the project.

MLA and Deputy Commissioner urged the officials to expedite the work while ensuring minimal inconvenience to the public. They assured continued engagement with the stakeholders to facilitate the seamless completion of the project.

SDM sumbal Murtaza Ahmad Sheikh and other concerned were also present on the occasion.

UNNAT helped the needy people, also organized a Jagran

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

In a heartwarming gesture to support the underprivileged and promote community care, the office bearers and volunteers of UNNAT NGO visited the Rehan Basera Shelter Home located in the Bahu Fort area of Jammu. The visit, held on the auspicious occasion of Navratri, was marked by the distribution of essential food items to the residents of the shelter home, along with the organization of a devotional Jagran to spread spiritual joy and positivity.

The program was presided over by Neena Abrol, General Secretary of UNNAT NGO, who emphasized the organization's enduring commitment to serving the needy, especially the elderly and destitute sections of society. Speaking on the occasion, Abrol stated, "UNNAT has been actively working towards supporting those in need. Our mission is to bring smiles and comfort to the lives of people who are often forgotten. The love and cooperation we receive from our team and the community keeps our efforts going strong." Treasurer of UNNAT, Dr. Anuradha, highlighted the emotional and humanitarian aspect of the visit. "Our members visited the shelter home with a heartfelt intention to stand by the elderly residents who are living away from their families. Through this small initiative, we wanted to assure them that they are not alone. We remain committed to continuing such outreach efforts in the future," she said. She also extended appreciation to those who are managing Rehan Basera for their noble work and called upon society to step forward and support such selfless endeavors.

The program featured devotional singing and prayers, creating an atmosphere of spiritual celebration for the shelter's residents, who participated with joy and gratitude. The Jagran not only uplifted their spirits but also brought the essence of Navratri into their lives with a sense of belonging and festive fervor. The event concluded with a formal vote of thanks delivered by the President of Rehan Basera Shelter Home, who expressed deep appreciation to UNNAT NGO for their generous gesture and continued support. Prominent members of the NGO, including Veena Bakshi, Rakesh Abrol, Ravi Sethi, Suman Abrol, Kanchan Sharma, Anjali Sethi, Radhika Suri, and Rajni, were also present, making the occasion even more special with their active participation.

'Say No to Drugs': DIPR artists spread message through Cultural Programme



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

A Cultural Awareness Programme on "Nasha Mukh Bharat" (Say No to Drugs) was today organised by the Cultural Unit, Department of Information & Public Relations (DIPR) Jammu here at JDA Club Roopnagar. The event, hosted in collaboration with District Administration Jammu, aimed to spread awareness about the detrimental effects of drug abuse and encourage a drug-free society.

Artists of the Cultural Unit raise awareness through theme-based songs. The performers skillfully highlighted how drug addiction impacts individuals, families, and society at large.

SDPO Bakshi Nagar Satish Bhardwaj and Tehsildar Jammu North Aman Kumar Anand shared their views and also made the audience aware of the topic.

They appreciated the efforts of the Department of Information and Public Relations for organising the event to generate awareness for the audience.

The whole programme was conducted under the directions of Joint Director Information Jammu Atul Gupta and supervision of Cultural Office, Mukesh Kumar Sharma.

Dr. Abhishek Bharti organises mask making workshop at Haryana



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
JAMMU:

J&K's well-known designer, theatre director, and Sangeet Natak Akademi Delhi's Ustad Bismillah Khan Awardee, Dr. Abhishek Bharti, conducted a three-day professional mask-making workshop at the Department of Teacher Education, Central University of Haryana, from April 1 to April 3, 2025. The workshop was organized in connection with Hindi Diwas. On this occasion,

Vice-Chancellor Prof. Tankeshwar Kumar, Head of the Department of Teacher Education Prof. Pramod Kumar, Prof. Nand Kishore, Prof. Dinesh Chahal, Dr. Mukesh Upadhyay, Mr. Dilip Patel, Dr. Sharan Prasad, Dr. Rubul Kalita, Dr. Neha, and other distinguished guests were present. In this workshop, 60 students from different states of India participated and created various kinds of masks, including those of animals such as horses, donkeys, dogs, cats, rats, elephants,

eagles, owls, monkeys, and oxen. Additionally, they crafted masks representing witches, Hindu deities such as Radha, Krishna, Vishnu, Shiva, Hanuman, Ganpati, Suryadev, and Indradev, as well as masks related to various theatrical plays. Briefing the media, Dr. Abhishek Bharti said, "As a theatre director from J&K, I feel honored to conduct this workshop at such a prestigious institution in Haryana. The history of these masks in theatre dates back around five thousand years, and their use on stage makes performances more impactful." Speaking on the occasion, Vice-Chancellor Prof. Tankeshwar Kumar stated that this workshop provided an excellent opportunity for students to develop their skills and explore new ways of education through theatre.

Workshop coordinator Dr. Mukesh Upadhyay presented the training outline and emphasized that today's young generation, aspiring to pursue professional theatre, must acquire knowledge of all aspects of theatre design, mask-making being a crucial part of scenic design.

DDC Chairman, MLA Udhampur East kick start blacktopping work of 6 Km NH to Mahamaya Mandir road



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
UDHAMPUR:

Chairman District Development Council Udhampur Lal Chand today kick-started the black-topping work on the 6 km National Highway to Mahamaya Mandir road being constructed at a cost of Rs 7.38 cr. The foundation stone of the road was laid in March 2024. MLA Udhampur East, Ranbir Singh Pathania, DDC Udhampur-I Puran Chand and DDC Tikri Ashu Sharma, along with the officials from the PWD department, including AEE and JE were also present at the launch of the work.

This is the first road project among 13 projects on which the black topping work is being initiated. The project was prioritised by the District Development Council under NABARD in the FY 2023-24. Another project under the same sanction- the Bridge over Dhandyal Nallah at the Krimachi Debrah road has already been completed and opened for the commuters.

The blacktopping of the road from the National Highway to Mahamaya Mandir represents a significant infrastructure development. This project is prioritised by the District Development Council (DDC) as it holds cultural and tourism value by enhancing connectivity to religious sites like the Mahamaya Mandir. The completion of the Dhandyal Nallah Bridge on the Krimachi Debrah road, another project under the same sanction, demonstrates progress in addressing critical infrastructure needs.

The projects contribute to the overall development of the region by improving connectivity, facilitating economic activity, and enhancing access to essential services. The improved road infrastructure will significantly benefit pilgrims visiting the Mahamaya Mandir, enhancing their travel experience.

The Chairman congratulated the locals of the area for the developmental initiatives and urged the officials concerned to maintain the quality of the work.

The locals also thanked the chairman for conceding their long-pending demand.

Floriculture Deptt. Kashmir launches Capacity Building Program for Growers

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
SRINAGAR:

In a significant initiative to empower floriculture growers and entrepreneurs, the Directorate of Floriculture, Kashmir launched a comprehensive Training, Exposure, and Interaction Program for the year 2025-26.

The program is aimed at equipping stakeholders across Kashmir with advanced skills, fostering innovation, and promoting sustainable practices in the floriculture sector.

The initiative includes a series of expert-led workshops, interactive sessions, and exposure visits.

Some of the major components include Advanced Cultivation Training, Pest and Disease Management, Water Use Efficiency, Best Cultural Practices, Market Connectivity, New Varieties Exposure and Networking Opportunities.

The initiative aims to improve livelihoods and boost floriculture as a sustainable industry, promote eco-friendly cultivation methods, enhance the competitiveness of Kashmir's floriculture sector in both domestic and international markets and encourage entrepreneurship and innovation.

Doda celebrates Milestone in Education and Sustainability

Doda celebrates Milestone in Education and Sustainability



THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
DODA:

In a groundbreaking achievement, Doda district has successfully delivered 5,000 recycled school desks to government schools across the region, marking a significant milestone in education and sustainability.

This innovative initiative, implemented by Indian Pollution Control Association (IPCA), funded by SBI

Cards and Payment Services Limited under their flagship CSR initiative MASS (Mantra for Advance Sustainable Solution) and supported by the District Administration Doda, showcases a pioneering approach to environmental conservation and resource utilization.

The culmination ceremony, held here in Community Hall, was attended by DDC Chairman Dhananther Singh Kotwal; Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh; DDC Vice-

Chairperson Sangeeta Bhagat; Founder & Director, IPCA Ashish Jain and Secretary IPCA Ajay Garg and other Officers of District Administration.

The event featured a lamp-lighting ceremony, the inspection of a stall showcasing a skit on "Plastic Waste Management," and the release of a booklet titled "Shaping the Future of Waste Management."

In his address, DDC Chairman Dhananther Singh Kotwal highlighted the need for better infrastructure in schools, calling this initiative a significant step towards enhancing the education system in Doda.

Deputy Commissioner Harvinder Singh praised the contributions of all stakeholders and emphasized the importance of these steps in enhancing the education system in the district. "A student's bright future is our aim," he added.

The Director IPCA, while promising further collaboration, stressed on the need for plastic waste segregation and reuse to prevent soil and water pollution.

DLSA, Srinagar organizes awareness programme on UTRC

THE KASHMIR TALK BUREAU
SRINAGAR:

District Legal Services Authority (DLSA), Srinagar, organized an awareness programme on the Under Trial Review Committee (UTRC) at Central Jail Srinagar.

The initiative was conducted under the able guidance of Shazia Tabasum, Member Secretary of J&K Legal Services Authority, and under the chairmanship of Tasleem Arif, Principal District and Sessions Judge, Srinagar, and under the supervision of Sajad Ur Rehman, Sub-Judge/Secretary, DLSA

Srinagar. The primary objective of the event was to educate jail inmates about the role and significance of the UTRC in safeguarding their rights and ensuring they are not unduly detained.

The programme witnessed the active participation of Para Legal Volunteers (PLVs) from the Prison Legal Aid Clinic, alongside jail inmates. Tasneem Kausar, Deputy Legal Aid Defense Counsel, served as the resource person and provided in-depth insights into the mandate of the UTRC.

She highlighted the committee's role in reviewing the cases of under-

trial prisoners, ensuring that their legal rights are upheld, and emphasizing the importance of swift justice. The session also covered legal remedies available to inmates, the necessity of speedy trials, and their constitutional rights within the criminal justice system.

A key focus of the programme was to inform inmates about the upcoming 2nd UTRC meeting scheduled for 15th April 2025. Tasneem Kausar urged the inmates to come forward with their cases, particularly those falling under the 15 specified categories eligible for review under the UTRC framework.